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New Masses

JANUARY 14, 1936 15c

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A Case-History from Nazi Germany

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The American Students Unite

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New Masses

JANUARY 14, 1936

Roosevelt's Message

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S spectacular radio address to Congress was delivered in a violently partisan atmosphere of Democratic raptures and Republican guffaws, except when he spoke of the danger of war. On the domestic situation President Roosevelt spoke for the more moderate —or timorous — section of capitalism, which might be called the capitalism of the fifty percent profiteers, as opposed to the bigger, more arrogant and more insatiable monopolists who want it all, want it now, and want it all the time. Roosevelt's reminder to the Liberty Leaguers that his administration saved American capitalism as it slumped toward dissolution in 1933 will be completely lost on these gentlemen. They know they were saved for the time being, and that is enough for them to know. Recovered from the panic fright that sent Wall Street traveling on its knees to Washington in March, 1933, they assume that an era of endless "prosperity" is opening. They are making huge profits, intend to make huger ones and propose to insure this program by kicking Roosevelt out and bringing in another Coolidge or Hoover. As for unemployment, relief, wages, hours, living standards, social security—these are questions that "business men" will take care of in their own eminently businesslike way.

THE SNATCH RACKET — *Russell T. Limbach*

AS between Roosevelt and the Liberty League, the choice facing the American people is simply how drastically they are to be put through the wringer. Roosevelt's program adjusts the rollers a little farther apart; the Liberty League would squeeze every drop of blood out of us immediately. In uttering his "challenge" to the Liberty League to dare repeal the New Deal, Roosevelt conveniently forgot that he has himself been repealing it from the start. From the first automobile settlement which put the administration's official seal of approval on company unions, through the N.R.A.-backed San Francisco terror, through the savage cuts and stoppages in Federal relief, the $19 to $94 a month W.P.A. "security," the emasculation of any decent social security program, the breathing spell to Wall Street, and every tacit and expressed submission to the demands of monopoly capitalism, Roosevelt has retreated step by step from even his own totally inadequate program. His boast on Jan. 3 that we are advancing toward a balanced budget must be taken in the light of his budget message of Jan. 6, which proposes further cuts in relief. The advance toward a balanced budget is to be made over the half-starved bodies of the unemployed.

IF THE American people had to choose between Roosevelt and the Liberty League, the prospect would be gloomy enough. The real choice, however, is beginning to emerge in ever clearer outline, embodied in the movement for the broadest kind of a Farmer-Labor Party, which will fight for the fundamental rights of labor, for social insurance at the expense of the employers, and against war and fascism. The American Liberty League's composition is thoroughly bi-partisan; it stands for as the spokesman of monopoly capitalism, disregarding the largely factitious distinctions between Democrats and publicans. The Farmer-Labor rises to confront it. This year's paign will see the major class lin America clearly drawn on a nat political scale.

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Defeated the A.A.A.?

upreme Court has done it .. Of course, the nine justices go into a huddle with the Liberty ague before they found the A.A.A. nconstitutional, but so far as the most reactionary forces in America today are concerned, the result could not be more desirable. Not that the A.A.A. was a boon to those farmers most in need of federal aid. A demagogic bill at best, it benefited the wealthy farmers and ystematically drove the poor farmers off the land. Whatever benefits filtered hrough to the debt-ridden poor farmers at the bottom of the heap were immediately transferred to their creditors —the banks, the big business interests. In the South the A.A.A. actually speeded the dispossession of tenant farmers; in the Middle West, the poor farmers gained almost nothing and found themselves being squeezed out of their property—but here, certain groups of the middle farmers managed to enefit. The Liberty League had seen the process of dispossession slowing up. The middle farmer too must lose his roperty. The Supreme Court has come the aid of the fascist reactionaries king primarily within the Republi- Party by removing the last barrier he way of forcing out all but the rich farmers. With the defeat of A.A.A. the processors are now able tain all profits from holding prices id not paying tribute to the govern- .. The Liberty League has gained finite victory. Like the N.R.A., the A.A.A. had served its purpose s scrapped; and the ruthless, unded drive against the standard of ng and against all elements in the iddle class has been speeded. The upreme Court certainly has proved its alue to finance capital. It is worth hile building a new, elaborate edifice house them.

The Nazis Demand Ransom

THE Nazis are attempting to stage a gigantic international extortion. hey have offered a number of the Jews Germany for ransom to the outside orld just as on the usual gangster ms—if you don't pay, the victim will tortured to death. Unbelievable as nay seem, a group of rich Jews of t Britain has enlisted to help carry gh this scheme; a delegation of composed of Sir Herbert Samuel, er High Commissioner for Palesand deposed leader of the British liberals, Viscount Bearsted, head of the Shellert Corporation (a Shell Oil magnate), and Simon Marks, president of a British chain-store organization, is coming here to negotiate with rich American Jews. The "plan" consists of helping the Nazi government deport from 100,000 to 250,000 Jews from Germany by allowing them to take out some of their properties in German goods. A special fund created by the rich Jews in Great Britain and the United States would finance an additional export trade from Germany equivalent to the amount taken out by the deported Jews. The Nazi government would thereby not only flood the world with German goods, but would also get some sorely needed foreign exchange with which to buy raw materials and foodstuffs. Undoubtedly, the scheme was born out of the Nazis' financial extremities. Food grows scarcer in Germany, particularly fats. Germany's Al Capones are trying to solve their grocery problem with a typical gangster scheme.

Two Millions in Four Years

DELEGATES arrived in Cleveland for the Third United States Congress of the League Against War and Fascism expecting adjustments in the League program and a broadening of its base in the light of new conditions. Over twenty-two hundred men and women, representing the broadest cross-section of the American scene, representing approximately two million people, anticipated a Congress which would give them a new impetus, a wider outlook. The Congress fulfilled their expectations. The gains made over the meeting held in Chicago a year before were strikingly apparent as soon as the various commissions met to deal with specific issues. Trade-union delegates represented all of the basic industries—auto, rubber, longshore and seamen unions, building trades, steel, iron and coal, white-collar groups. It was necessary to organize new commissions to deal with the special problems of children, education, farmers and veterans, supplementing the older committee on religion, war and fascism, youth, women and national minorities. But it was not until the resolution committee reported to the floor of the Congress that the majority of delegates realized that they were participating in a session which promised in one stroke to broaden the anti-war, anti-fascist base of the League Against War and Fascism.

PROFESSOR Robert Morss Lovett introduced a resolution unanimously sponsored by the National Executive Committee of the League calling for appointment of representatives from the Congress to meet in a joint committee. This committee would be composed of representatives of the League, the Socialist Party and various trade unions. It would "do everything possible . . . that a joint effort shall be made to create a truly all-embracing federation for active, practical cooperation of all forces working against the threats of war and fascism." The object was to enlist the immediate support of trade unions. And when Paul Porter, officially representing the Socialist Party, endorsed the resolution, when Charles Zimmerman of the Ladies Garment Workers' Union and Earl Browder of the Communist Party advocated its immediate adoption, it became apparent to the delegates that here at last a working commission was about to be set up, a commission that would direct its activities to bring together all the leading elements in the trade unions. It pledged the Socialist Party to full cooperation with the American League in working out a realistic program for the beginnings of a United Front in the fight against war and fascism.

The Artists' Victory

A FINE object lesson in unity was given last week by New York artists when they compelled the removal of the "alien clause" from the requirements for exhibitors in the Municipal Art Gallery. No sooner had the prominent painter Yasuo Kunioshi discovered that he was barred from the city's gallery because of his Japanese birth than the artists swung into action on three main fronts: (1) through an open letter to Mayor LaGuardia signed by 65 prominent artists; (2) by a visit by the Artists Provisional Committee Against Discrimination to Mrs. Henry Breckenridge, chairman of the Mayor's Art Commission, and (3) by a similar delegation from the Artists Union. Both groups demanded the removal of this clause and also the "hospitality clause," which did not permit the exhibition of "any pictures which might offend the hospitality of the city." The Artists Union passed a resolution requiring all members to remove their exhibits from

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the gallery until these two provisions had been removed. Overwhelmed by these actions of the artists and by a flood of telephone calls, telegrams and letters, Mrs. Breckenridge called a special meeting of her committee which immediately complied with the demands. In view of the coming American Artists Congress this swift and decisive action shows in a concrete way the need for a strong organization of all artists to protect themselves from all reactionary efforts.

Planned Starvation

FOR many months the Association of Workers in Public Relief Agencies has urged their plan for reorganization of the Emergency Relief Bureau to give better service to New York's unemployed. The E.R.B. administration has given way inch by inch, forced to recognize the power of 8,000 white-collar workers organized in a militant union. Under the slogan "We need our jobs; our clients need us!" the A.W.P.R.A. welded their own cause to the needs of the unemployed. Forced into the open, the administration quickly lost its mask of concern for the "underprivileged masses" and became hard-boiled. The angel of mercy became a union-smashing boss. Fascist measures of repression were set up in the bureau. The recently won agreement on "personnel practice" providing for a joint arbitration board with union representation, flew into the wastebasket. Two separate spy organizations were created to check up the activities of the bureau workers, both of them working out of the office of the Commissioner of Accounts, while the E.R.B. started a systematic campaign of slander to discredit the leadership of the union and break the solidarity of the workers. Layoffs were handed out to 1,800 workers in the bureau, unable at that time to handle the increased number of applications for relief. The A.W.P.R.A., by tireless mass effort, managed to get most of these workers on P.W.A., meanwhile pushing its plan for a decent standard of home relief.

THEN the E.R.B. presented its workers with a counterplan which meant layoffs for 2,000 more workers in the bureau, now so badly understaffed that workers in some precincts are forced to work until nine and ten o'clock at night and still are unable to handle the intake of applications. With unparalleled hypocrisy the administration calls its latest drive against the unemployed a "reorganization plan" for more efficient operation of the bureau. With callous indifference to facts it claims the reorganization is based on the recommendations of the Governor's Commission and the Mayor's Committee on Unemployment Relief, which have been gathering dust for many months in the administration's files. But both these reports called for amplification, not cutting, of relief s the unemployed. What the really means is this. First, ever the inauguration of W.P.A. there h been a steady, organized drive to hammer down relief to the lowest leve that the workers of New York wi tolerate. Second, the E.R.B. is bei rationalized as a political machine wi an eye to the municipal election 1937. Workers who are non-resident non-citizens, non-voters are the first to go. Later on, these jobs can be filled with voters whose votes the administration can command. What happens in the E.R.B. is the concern of every radical, every liberal, every progressive worker. Only such workers, united in the struggle against all forms of reaction, can frustrate the plan to make relief a shuttlecock in the game of bourgeois politics. They can do it by supporting the fight of the A.W.P.R.A.

The de Torriente Frameup

LOLO DE TORRIENTE, noted Cuban radical writer, was deported recently. On her representation to the American government that deportation to Cuba would lead to imprisonment and possibly more serious consequences, she was permitted to go to Mexico. But she was allowed only twenty-four hours to make her departure. To get to Mexico in that time she had to take a plane with a stopover in Havana. The officials of the American Air-Transport Company assured her that she would not be molested in Havana. Nevertheless, the trip was in effect a delivery of Miss Torriente to the Havana police. When the plane landed, the police, who had apparently been warned of her arrival, were waiting and immediately jailed her. No official of the Air Transport Company, no official of our diplomatic service usually so carefully hearkened to by Cuban authorities, has protested. The only conclusion that can be drawn is that the United States authorities connived with the Cuban authorities in one of the most contemptible frameups on record. The League of American Writers, of which Miss Torriente is an honorary member, has joined with the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners in protesting this action and in demanding her release. They urge all sympathetic persons immediately to write or wire protests to Col. Fulgencio Batista, Camp Colombia, Havana, Cuba.

New Masses

VOL. XVIII, No. 3 — CONTENTS — JANUARY 14, 1936

Editorial Comment 3
We See Daylight in 1936...John Strachey 6
"Here Is Your Jew".....John L. Spivak 8
Sinclair Lewis Visits a Strike..Jack Wilgus 10
John Reed and the Jingo Press
Granville Hicks 12
Three Poems.....Stanley Burnshaw 15
An Answer to Ernest Boyd..A. B. Magil 16
The American Students Unite
Celeste Strack 19
Correspondence 21
Review and Comment:
By Way of Review...Isidor Schneider 23
Case History....Alice Withrow Field 24
The Million Words of Mr. Barnes
Arnold W. Bartell 25
Miner vs. Fink.....John Mullen 26
Murals in Fiction.....Ann Rivington 27
The Theater:
Two New Yiddish Plays
Nathaniel Buchwald 28
The Screen:
Tale of Two Cities.....Owen Burke 29
Between Ourselves 30
Drawings:
Limbach, Hainsly, Cronback, Lipchitz.

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We See Daylight in 1936

JOHN STRACHEY

LONDON, Jan. 6.

WHAT are the prospects of the working-class movement in 1936? I believe that everywhere in Europe the prospects of the revolutionary working-class movement are better than they have been for some years past.

I believe that we should emphasize this fact. We are sometimes rather reluctant to emphasize the favorable factors in any situation lest we breed illusions and diminish people's sense of the urgency and necessity for the maximum effort. But I am not sure that we do not all work better and do more if we see also the other side of the picture. There is no harm, at any rate, in looking at the favorable factors if we determine to make of them an inspiration for the bigger efforts.

What then are the hopeful factors in the European situation today? First of all, the events of the last month have revealed the true character of the plans of the British government. They have revealed, to far wider circles than the British Communist Party could reach at this time, the deadly and monstrous character of the policy of the British government—a policy which it has become clear to whole sections of the British population must lead straight towards war.

It is already much that this policy has revealed. But it has been checked as well as revealed. The reaction of public opinion was so strong that the British government has had to draw back. We must not overestimate but neither must we underestimate the importance of the replacement of Sir Samuel Hoare by Mr. Eden.

It is true that enormous pressure is already being exercised upon Mr. Eden to go back to the old policy. But our task in Britain is to see to it that equally strong pressure is put on him and upon the cabinet to follow the peace policy with which Mr. Eden's name has become associated. Nor should it be thought that it is necessarily impossible to propel Mr. Eden and the British along the path of genuine support of the League and of peace.

It is not a question of what Mr. Eden's personal inclinations may be, of whether he is sincere or insincere. This we have no means of telling but we do know that his whole career and reputation has been associated with a pro-League policy, with closer relations with the more peaceful powers such as France and even to some extent with closer relations with the Soviet Union and with a real opposition to German and Italian fascist aggression. It will need the very maximum pressure of public opinion to force or to enable Mr. Eden to follow this path of peace, but we now know that such a public pressure can be mobilized.

The second favorable factor in the New Year prospects of the workers of the world is the startlingly sudden growth of Soviet strength and prosperity. I believe that if the peace of the world can be kept or rather restored during 1936, we shall see developments in the Soviet Union which will astound us, which will inspire every worker in the world and confound the propagandist hacks of every capitalist government. I do not think that even we yet realize the importance of the sudden appearance of Soviet prosperity, for it is nothing less which we are witnessing. I believe that a principal task for our movement during 1936 is to explain and popularize what the Soviet Union is doing on a quite new scale. That great new book *Soviet Communism,* by Mr. and Mrs. Webb (it will be published in America in March) gives us a marvelous foundation upon which to work. Everyone of us must not only read it, but master every word of it, for this book equips one like nothing else for the task of explaining the significance of the Soviet Union. I believe that if during 1936 we really do this effectively we can by the end of the year produce such a wave of friendship and solidarity for the Soviet Union and its peace policy amongst the peoples of the world as no government will be able to disregard.

The third favorable factor is the undoubted weakening of both Italian and German fascism. The resistance of the Ethiopians to the attacks of the Italian imperialists has not only made Mussolini to totter, but has raised the standard of resistance and revolt throughout the colonial peoples. In Egypt, the Nationalist movement has reawakened. In China, the corrupt and traitorous generals of the Chinese government, busy selling their country to the Japanese, have been interrupted by a revival of the Chinese popular movement for liberation. In Germany also, the revelation of the inefficiency and rottenness of Italian fascism should have its reaction. It should enable many more millions of the German people to see that the frightful sacrifices which the Nazi regime is imposing on them will not result in the glorious future for their country which Hitler has promised but in the shameful debacle which is approaching in Italy. Indeed, one of the biggest things that is happening today is the calling of the great fascist bluff of efficiency. Fascism has largely existed by means of this bluff. Its spokesmen have told us that although it might be cruel, ruthless, dictatorial, it was at any rate supremely efficient ("Mussolini has made the trains run on time in Italy"). And now this bluff has been called in the most unexpected way and by the most unexpected people. The Ethiopians, poor, ignorant, primitive and half unarmed as they are, have shown the world that underneath the garish facade of fascism there lies not efficiency, but a mass of corruption, chaos and rottenness.

The fourth favorable factor in the world situation today is the continued advance of the People's Front in France. It is true that the Left, owing to the vacillation of some of the radicals and very possibly to actual cheating over the voting, just stopped short of overthrowing Laval last week. Still the broad fact remains that the unity of the French workers and peasants grows steadily stronger and deeper and that French fascism has been forced to retreat and maneuver before it. The struggle is, of course, far from over, but it has been well begun.

Finally there are indications that the situation in Spain is also improving. Something like a People's Front appears to be arising there. Fascism has not been able to exploit the defeat of the 1934 revolution to the full and there seems a real possibility of a swing to the Left in the elections which are due to take place in a month's time. It may be that Gil Robles, the fascist leader, will attempt a march on Madrid in order to avoid a Left victory at the elections, but it is by no means certain that he will succeed if he does.

So much for the world situation. What are the prospects of the working-class movement in Great Britain? Here the favorable factors are not so easy to find. We cannot deny that the barefaced swindle of the election, though it is now exposed to almost everyone, was a success. This swindle has saddled us with a reactionary parliament for the whole of next year and probably much longer. Nor can we pretend that the British working-class movement is in more than the first stages of recovery from the disasters and decay of the last five years.

Still there are signs of recovery. The forward movement of the miners is an enormous thing. Moreover, the new policy of the Communist Party and its activity during the elections and since, have undoubtedly taken the first steps towards the creation of a reunited and revivified British working-class movement based on a scientific understanding of Socialism such as can alone bring success to the British working class.

Here I have deliberately emphasized only the favorable factors. We all know that there is another and darker side to the picture. We all know the strength of the forces of reaction which both in this country and all over the world face the working-class forces. But it is important that we should realize that cracks and serious cracks have appeared in these opposing forces for through these cracks we can see the daylight.

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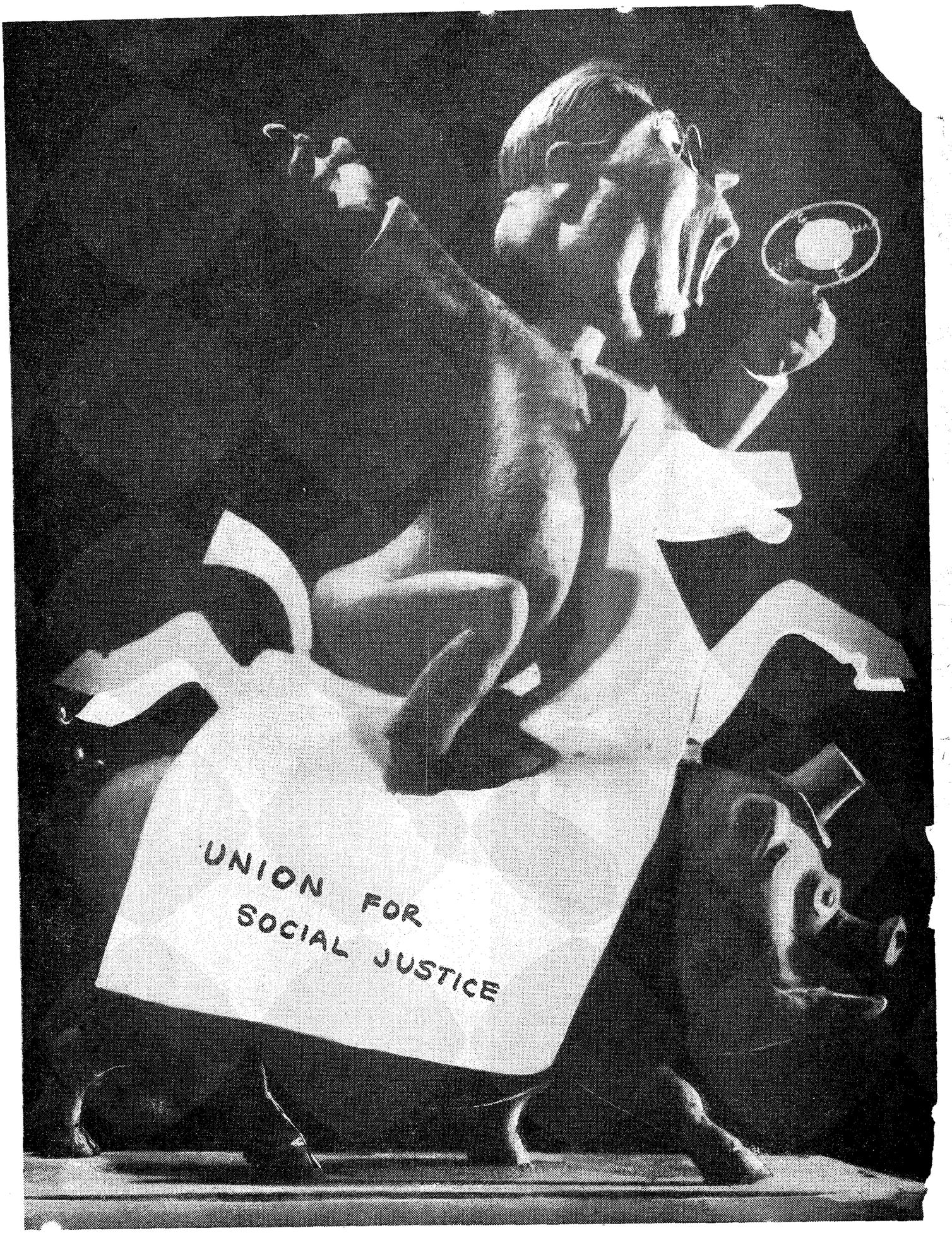

THE MAN ON A WHITE HORSE

R. Cronbac

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"Here is Your Jew!"

JOHN L. SPIVAK

WARSAW, POLAND.

THE Jews still remaining in Germany, out of the original 560,000 who had been rooted in the soil and the cities, are being rapidly driven to the ghetto. Disfranchised, torn from the normal processes of life to which they had become accustomed, ever greater numbers are fleeing the country—to Palestine, Switzerland, France, Austria, Italy—to any land that will give them shelter.

The Jews who still remain in Germany either because they do not have the money with which to flee or because they still hope that some not-too-distant future will restore sanity to the unhappy land, have the look of hunted animals when they walk the streets of the muddy roads of the country, the look of men expecting someone to spit on them.

So much has been written of the Jew in Germany and what the Nazis, mad with power and the need of blaming someone for the hunger of a people and the disintegration of an economic system, have done to him.

The incredible acts against this people have been chronicled, but I don't think anyone has recorded the story of the Jewish farmer thirty kilometers from the thriving little city of Bamberg in central Germany. There have been millions of words written about the Jews in Germany, but I think this story is worth recording.

I cannot give his name or exactly where he can be found, for he and his family still live in Germany and I visited their home. If you have read all the millions of words written of Nazi terror and persecution you still would not understand the fear of a people lest the Nazis learn that they talked; you must talk with them in Germany and see their eyes when they plead with you not to say with whom you talked, really to understand.

He is one of the numerous Jews who settled on the land. He was a Jew who knew nothing of the history or traditions, language or customs of his people, a Jew who had been so absorbed by the German soil he and his ancestors had tilled that he knew only that he was a Jew as people know a legend handed down from generation to generation.

For eighteen years, after the war had ended and he had recovered from the wounds received in battle for his Fatherland, he had tilled the soil, never thinking that the woman he had married was a Christian or that the four children she had borne him were half Jew and half Christian." His wife was an intelligent, healthy girl of sound peasant stock, simple in her wants, hard-working, frugal—the sort of mate to help build the home and rear the family, and in the years that followed their marriage they had worked the land, the same land his father had worked before him and his father's father. He lived peacefully and contentedly, a friend to his neighbors and befriended by his neighbors.

He was a poor farmer, like most farmers in Germany, for out of the 5,000,000 farms in the land, 3,000,000 consist of less than two hectares (about five acres) and he was one of that great class who grew produce which he sold to regular customers in the surrounding villages. There was not enough soil to pasture cattle to sell cows or milk and add to his meager income like farmers with a little more land.

In the disorganized and unhappy years that followed the attempt of the victorious Allies to crush the German people, he heard of the growing anti-semitism, but dismissed it from his mind. There had always been anti-semites from the time the Jews first dispersed to the corners of the globe and the continued development of anti-semitism just before Hitler got in power still left him undisturbed. He was a German, a war veteran; this was Germany, the most civilized country in the world. All this was merely the talk of men playing politics and like most political talks, was of no consequence to him.

Then the persecutions began. Neighbors with whom they had eaten, with whose children their children played turned against them; those who had bought from them were now fearful of patronizing a Jew lest they incur the displeasure of the Nazis who by now controlled everything and were becoming vicious in the attacks on Jews. When he brought his produce to the village market they refused to buy except at absurdly low prices. Then the schools were closed to the children. A rising tide isolated them from the community in which they had lived all their lives.

I WAS passing a store in Bamberg when I first saw this Jew's wife lugging a milk can. I did not know then that she had married a Jew. She was a husky, solidly-built woman in her late thirties with cheeks as red as a healthy baby's and the strong hands of one used to toil. She was carrying the milk can to an old and battered car parked outside the store and since I happened to be passing at the moment I opened the door for her. She smiled a swift, "Danke, viel mal."

"Pretty big load for a woman," I commented cheerfully.

"I am strong," she smiled. "Women who work on farms have to be strong."

I could not tell whether her friendliness was just that of a neighborly country or whether she was actually glad to talk to some one; it was not until after she had accepted my invitation to have coffee in a nearby cafe that I realized that she was just simply hungry to talk to some one—any one.

"You are a foreigner," she said when we were seated with the cups before us.

"Yes," I said and added, "I am a journalist interested in conditions in Germany. I do not know many farmers so I am doubly glad that you accepted my invitation."

"What do you want to know?" she laughed. "How to raise greens?"

"I want to know how things are with you farmers, what you earn, how you manage, whether conditions are any better for you now than they were a few years ago."

"Some farmers are better off and some are worse," she said. "The little farmer has nothing now."

"And before?"

"Before we used to raise vegetables and sell them. We had regular customers. But now there is a decree that everybody must sell only to the public market—at wholesale prices instead of retail. The only ones who make any money out of that are the big farmers because they are the only ones with any quantity to sell. The little farmer eats up what he's got and when he sells what little there is left he doesn't get much."

"You mean that this new decree works out for the benefit of the big landowner?"

"Yes, and there is another law for his benefit, too. He cannot sell his land. There are many laws and they are all for the big landowners. There is nothing for the small farmer except work and maybe, after a bad harvest, to lose his land."

"Why is it good for the big farmer if he cannot sell his land? I should imagine that it would be bad because if he has to borrow money, the banks won't lend it to him, for if you can't sell the land how will the banks get their money back?"

She nodded. "That is right; that is why the big landowners are unhappy. But—when you have much land you can always manage to borrow money. No, no, this law is meant to build still bigger estates. It is not hard to see what happens. When the small farmer gets nothing for his greens and has to pay big taxes or has a bad harvest, he will lose his farm. Either the bank takes it for loans or he sells it to the big landowner; and if it goes to the bank it is sold to the big landowner anyway for the banks are not farmers. The big landowners

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are growing bigger and the poor farmer is losing his land and just works for the big landowner."

It was not until after this conversation that I checked on her comments. Her shrewd peasant mind had seen very clearly the tendency of the Nazi regime to develop vast feudal estates and the gradual conversion of the small independent farmer to the state of a dependent peasant.

"You are a small farmer, I gather?"

"Very small," she replied. "We have less than two hectares."

I had some farm statistics in my pocket and I pulled them out.

"There are 200,000 farmers in Germany with between 20 and 100 hectares," I said. "There must be some like those around here. Are they affected as badly as you?"

"Are there that many!" she asked with a note of surprise.

"These are the figures. I think they are reliable."

"I didn't know. But it does not matter. There are farms that size around me, but they are badly off, too, because most of them raised cattle and hogs."

"Why should they be badly off? Prices for meats are rising. I should think they'd be making money."

She shook her head and her eyes twinkled. "They would be if they didn't kill all their cattle and hogs."

The puzzled look on my face must have been obvious for she continued: "The government passed a law prohibiting the importation of fodder. Most farmers have not enough pasture for many milk cows and the land is too valuable to be used only for pasture. It was cheaper to import fodder and when the government stopped that, the farmers killed their cattle and hogs. It was better to kill them and sell the meat than see them die of starvation, *nicht?* So now there is not enough meat and not enough milk cows for milk and butter and everybody is unhappy!"

"Then," I remarked, "it seems that the farmers are not very satisfied?"

She shook her head vigorously. "And they are scolding also because the government is making the farmers take the unemployed."

"I don't understand."

"There are many people without work, *nicht?* If they have no work the government or the city has to give them something to eat, *nicht?* So the government makes the farmers take some of these workers whether they are needed on the farm or not and the farmer has to pay these workers and so they are very unhappy."

"I see. Did you have to employ an unemployed man even on your small farm?"

For a moment her face clouded and then she said, "No; we have not been asked."

"Got influence with the government, eh?"

Her eyes clouded again. I wondered what caused it and I asked her.

"Oh, nothing!" she said quickly. "Probably some thought about the farm. You journalists see too much!" she concluded laughing.

"Please don't think I'm just curious, but I'm trying to understand German customs as well. Is it customary around here for the husband to send his wife out to lug large cans of milk instead of going for them himself?"

She did not answer for a moment; then she shook her head slightly and said:

"My husband is ill, so I went for the milk."

"Oh! Is your farm on the outskirts of the city?"

Again that strange look flashed in her eyes. She shook her head slowly.

"No. It is thirty kilometers from here."

"You can get a better price for your produce in the city instead of the village?"

"I came for the milk," she said in a peculiar tone.

"All the milk cows slaughtered for that many kilometers around here! The situation must be worse than I thought!"

"There are quite a few farms with milk cows left," she said a little grimly.

"I don't understand," I said, frankly puzzled. "Why, then, do you drive sixty kilometers to get milk when you can get it near your farm?"

She shook her head with a faint smile. "You are an American journalist, eh? You can tell it to the Americans. I drive sixty kilometers to get milk because I married a Jew."

She said it with a note of defiance in her voice and a sharp glance at me as though to see my reaction to her announcement.

"You mean that because you married a Jew the farmers in your neighborhood will not sell you milk—milk needed for your children?"

"Yes," she said in a rather tense voice. "They would sell milk to us, but they are afraid of the Party people, so I have to go far from home to get it—some place where I am not known."

I had heard that Aryan farmers would not sell milk to Jews but I had been told that this was chiefly true in East Prussia where the Aryans were trying to drive out Jewish farmers and storekeepers, offering them about 15 percent of what their business or land was worth. I told her what I had heard.

"This is Bamberg," she said. "It is not far from Nuremberg."

Nuremberg and Munich, centers of the anti-Jewish manifestations, where hate against this race was so great that children ran after known Jews and spat at them while their elders stood about laughing and egging them on, was apparently as bad if not worse than East Prussia. In these areas Jews have been forced into an isolation that is a ghetto without the name. Aryans, even those whose innate decency and humaneness have revolted against the persecution, dare not have anything to do with the outcast race lest they themselves come under the ban of the Nazi leaders and members of the Nazi Party.

In Munich, I knew, Nazis tried to keep physicians from attending sick Jews but with only one or two exceptions the doctors refused to be bullied, threatening that if such pressure persisted then they would refuse to attend sick Aryans. The doctors were left alone after that, but druggists will not fill prescriptions for Jews.

I asked her if these things were true in her neighborhood and she nodded slowly.

"What do Jews do when they can't get medicines?"

"They go to a distant city where they are not known. If they have no car, a neighbor goes for them. The Jews have been driven much closer together," she added. "Many did not know it before, but now they know they are Jews."

"Do they trouble you for having married a Jew?"

"Not now," she said in a low voice. "They used to threaten me and the children. The children with whom my children played used to run after me and shout that I was a whore, that I slept with a Jew—" She shrugged her shoulders and stopped in the middle of the sentence.

"Are there many Jews in your neighborhood?"

"Not so many. Many have run away—the younger ones. The older ones have no place to go. They are too old to change or they have no money to go away."

People who leave Germany are allowed to take ten marks with them — just about enough for a night's lodging and food but Jews who have sold their business or land can take one-fourth of their money out—after they have paid the government and "flight tax." A Jew with a 100,000 mark business who wants to leave Germany can, if he is lucky, rescue around 3,000 marks from it. The Jew who gets 20 percent for his business gets a very good price. Out of these 20,000 marks the government promptly takes one-fourth as a flight tax. In order to take the remaining 15,000 marks out of the country he has to exchange it into "immigrant marks"—money he can get beyond the German borders. And he gets only one-fourth of the value in foreign money for his marks—or about 3,500 marks for a 100,000 mark business.

The loss is enormous. For the Jew in Germany it means giving up everything that he had built in his lifetime and many are giving up everything for a feeling of security again, if not for themselves, for their children. Those who cannot raise enough to transport themselves and their families simply walk about with that hunted air so evident on their faces, waiting with a fatalistic resignation for more decrees, more laws which will drive them from poverty into the ghett

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...ney thought they had escaped cen-...es ago.

"But the German people are not savages," I said, thinking of the many kindly and gentle souls I had met. "Why should they have become so—"

"They have *not*. We know that some people are still friendly. They do not like this hate, but they are helpless. Party people have them terrified. I know that some neighbors are sorry for us. But—maybe that is because my husband is ill, but I don't think so. It is not the German people; it is the Party people."

"Why don't you sell and leave; you and husband are young enough—"

She shook her head. "We could not get enough money for our two hectares to pay our fare any place and what will I do in a strange land where I know no one, cannot speak the language? How will we find work when there is no work in all lands? No, we must stay here. At least from the land we get something to eat."

"No," she added thoughtfully, "I am used to it now and my husband—he does not mind either. But it is hard on the children—to be punished so because their mother married a Jew—"

I noticed her looking at a clock on the wall and I said:

"I should like to talk with your husband. Would you mind if I went out with you?"

She looked at me strangely and then nodded her head. A peculiar smile played about her lips as though she was thinking of something funny.

"You want to come to our farm? You want to see what happened to a Jew who married an Aryan so you can tell about it in the papers in America? Yes, there are things to tell. I will take you, but you must not say—"

"I have learned enough in Germany *not* to say with whom I talked. You need not fear."

"I do not fear for myself or my husband," she said quickly. "It is the children—"

With the milk can safely tied so as not to shake too much, we drove along the winding roads southwest of Bamberg until we came to her small farm with two chickens stepping about gingerly in the mud. A boy of about eight with blond, short-cropped hair was drawing water from the well in the center of the yard. He looked curiously at the stranger with his mother as we drove up. A little girl of not more than three, with a running nose that formed bubbles on her nostrils when she breathed, ran out of the house and paused on the top of the two worn wooden steps leading to the entrance door and smiled broadly and happily at her mother. I did not see the other children.

"My husband is probably in the kitchen," she said.

She opened the door for me. A strong, healthy-looking man of about forty sat on a stool in a corner of the room near a high white-tiled stove. He looked up as we came in and smiled, a friendly little smile that seemed to hide something very funny—and something that was deep in his thoughts. His eyes were bright, good natured, laughing.

He rose and shook hands with me, bowing low.

"You are a Jew?" he asked, his bright eyes filled with eager interrogation and before I could answer he poked his chest with a forefinger: "I am a Jew!" he announced with a gay little laugh that sent a chill down my spine. "I am a Jew!" he repeated, "and my wife is a Jew and my children are Jews!"

His Aryan wife stood aside while he kept repeating over and over again: "I am a Jew! And my wife is a Jew. My children are Jews!"

A sense of horror and pity swept over me as I realized what had happened to this man.

"Yes," his wife nodded, with that strange little smile that had played on her lips in the cafe, in answer to my unformed question. "It is more than half a year now that he took the littlest one in his arms and walked into the village. I heard later what happened. He had walked the streets, carrying the littlest one in his arms and crying loudly, 'I am a Jew! I am a war veteran! I fought for the Fatherland! See! Here is my youngest and she cannot get milk because I am a Jew!'

"The police came and took him off the streets. They knew who he was and they brought him and the littlest one home to me saying 'Here is your Jew'!"

Another article by John L. Spivak will appear next week.

Sinclair Lewis Visits a Strike

JACK WILGUS

RUTLAND, VT.

SINCLAIR LEWIS sent a messenger to get me. I found him sitting with a local newspaperman, in the best suite our best hotel offers. Lewis welcomed me cordially and then shot forward in his chair and demanded to know "where this strike differs from just any strike." I told him all I know about the strike of the five ...arble towns. This but supplemented his ...wn knowledge gained from a tour of the ...icket lines and a visit to the strike-breakers' ...arracks where he carved his name on several ...lubs "for the boys." "And they're not bad ...oys either," Lewis said to me. "I didn't ...ind a single killer among them. You would ...ind the killer down South." No killings ...et, Mr. Lewis, but those clubs have ...nocked down a goodly number of old ...omen and small boys and sent scores to the ...spital.

"Well, then, tell me about your strike," ...d Lewis after a long and interesting dissertation on everything. So I told him in brief, how seven hundred men struck, how they still are striking, still picketing, along with their wives and children and mothers and fathers . . . in weather in which not so many strikes have lasted months, when the thermometer stays below zero and the wind howls down the valley from off the hills. I told him that the wealthiest and most reactionary family in Vermont is trying to throw these people out of their five towns, and by the greatest show of deputies ever concentrated in this state, is trying to bring other men in to steal their jobs. I told Mr. Lewis that the Vermonters have proven themselves fierce strikers. I related how every time that the thugs fall upon small bodies of strikers, men, women or children, the whole community rises and marches through the town and once, more than a thousand marched all the way across the valley to Proctor, the holy of holies, where all the company police are housed and drove before them every sheriff, scab and deputy. I told him they have stopped the railway from running trains into these towns, that when trucks try to convey marble even with immense armed guards, something always happens, oil spills on the marble and it is spoiled, or the truck tips over, or many things may happen to marble being moved by night.

Mr. Lewis didn't see anything so very extraordinary in what I had related. He seemed mildly interested in the true tales of farmers and union men from all parts of the state who considered this their strike too and who brought in potatoes, hogs, eggs and milk. But then I told him the striking townspeople were so solid and strong, that fascist bands were being formed to prey on the workers by night. And this Mr. Lewis did not believe. Fascist bands in Vermont? It could happen? What purpose would fascists have in Rutland? The avowed purpose of first driving out the Reds, then preventing

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the spread of the union movement in the state and finally the break-up of the unions entirely. The government supplies the badges bearing the inscription "Minutemen" and the name of the state you may reside in. And the agents building this anti-labor gang tell the men they approach that this is "simply in case of civil strife."

The Officers Reserve, the Legion and other bodies are handing out the badges. It was announced at the Officers' Reserve closed dinner that it would become mandatory openly to display the badges later, by the state laws which would be introduced. There they outlined the forming of vigilantes in the strike area. Later a cross-section of Legion men, mostly scabs, and also drunks and the scum of the towns, met secretly with the organizer of the Minutemen in the armory. As my witness said, "they looked like second-story men." I told of the signals these gangs have, repeated quickly on the fire whistle of whatever town they are to assemble in. And of the quick action taken by the militants in the unions, who met and decided to answer the same signals, in mass.

"So, Mr. Lewis," I said, "we have on the one hand the birth of the Farmer-Labor Party . . . on the other, within a week of each . . . the Minutemen of Vermont." I was arrested and told that same week by the State's Attorney to be out of the county in 24 hours or face the consequences. "We don't need no laws. Where there aren't laws to apply to men like you, Wilgus, we have something called justice." The newspaperman had to admit this. He had "failed" to publish the story. Lewis rebuked the paper, but he did not believe me about the Minutemen. So I called in a witness, a man so prominent in Rutland that neither Lewis nor the newspaperman could refute him, or have any doubt that his first-hand information was authentic in every detail.

It was at this point Mr. Lewis jumped up, banged his fist, and said, "By God, it can be done . . . but it won't, not if I have to stay here and get on the trail of it at once." Sinclair Lewis was convinced that the forces of fascism are organizing in his "beloved" Vermont, where he is Squire of Barnard. And being convinced, he was likewise convinced that something systematic would have to be done in a hurry, for it may well be in Vermont, that the trends which will decide the future course of American history, will be given birth. There is building up a small but broad people's front which will be the Vermont Farmer-Labor Party. The two come at the same time. And Lewis saw the seriousness of it and told me, told the editor and told the prominent man whose name I am not at liberty to quote right now.

And, next morning, following Lewis' interview with the head of the company, big headlines in the Rutland Herald nearly bowled us over. They were the greatest shock to the strikers and the committee for the strikers, comprised of prominent Vermonters who saw it time to act before the five towns are a region of terror, mass evictions and the denial of all civil rights. Mr. Lewis was quoted as saying he "had soured on the strike," and repeating that it is just "an ordinary strike." And Lewis had left town for his other home on Cape Cod.

At once the Vermont Marble Company made big capital of what Lewis said, and the paper editorialized about it, and some of our prominent Vermonters wondered if it was so serious after all, and relief showed a drop from that day on, and once more I got the threat that I would have to leave the county, and Christmas came and went. There were no wreaths in the town of Danby, no Christmas dinner, no presents for the kiddies and the company and its rich owners, the Proctors of Proctor, made good use of our friend's belittling, his souring.

My wife wrote to Lewis at once, and he did send a telegram to The Rutland Herald, which was published in a retired position, far differently from his original statement. He denied that he had said he was soured on the strike. But he could not so easily undo the harm done. So I wrote him asking that he come out with a greeting to the strikers of the five towns. I urged that it get in the paper the day before Christmas. Nothing has come from Mr. Lewis.

So Sinclair Lewis came to Rutland, he was assigned a newspaperman to go about with him, was offered the columns of the paper for any statement he might care to make, he admitted that he was convinced of the birth of a fascist movement in Rutland County, that it could happen here and then by belittling the strike, he unwittingly gave impetus to the very fascist tendencies he warned America to stop before it was too late.

If it was an ordinary strike, as he says, he not being an ordinary man, has given the push to a movement that is not yet ordinary in Vermont, and it is up to us who live here to increase our efforts. It is ordinary hunger, ordinary cold, ordinary insecurity, these people of five towns suffer so fearlessly and militantly . . . but to Mr. Lewis it is so remote as to be "just ordinary."

Sinclair Lewis has furnished us with the text of his telegram to The Rutland Herald, correcting the story about his attitude toward the strike. The telegram read:

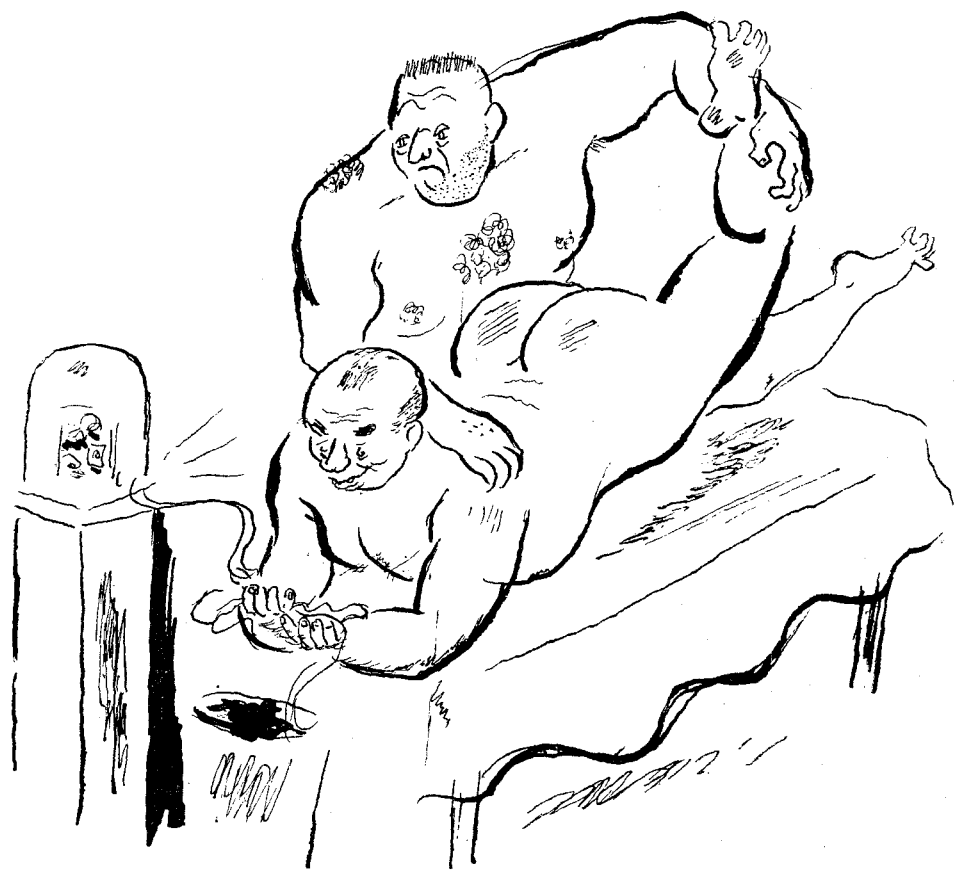
"To quote me as saying 'I have soured on the strike' misrepresents my attitude toward it. I simply meant that I had found nothing that I myself wanted to write about.

"But personally my sympathies are entirely with the strikers.

"They have peen paid atrociously.

"If the company is really losing money it would be wise and efficient of them to accept arbitration and to open their books freely to a certified accountant chosen by the arbitration committee."

He wishes to emphasize that this correction, while not displayed as prominently as the original story, was printed on the first page of The Herald.—THE EDITORS.



"MAKE UP MY MUSCLES LIKE U. S. STEEL. IT'S UP 10 POINTS!" *Ernest W. Hainsly*

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John Reed and the Jingo Press

GRANVILLE HICKS

In the first eight months of 1917, the eight months before he sailed for Russia, John Reed's principal concern, as this chapter shows, was the struggle against war. His experiences on the Western and Eastern Front, as described in preceding chapters, had both strengthened his awareness of the imperialist basis of the World War and intensified his hatred of warfare. Even after the entrance of the United States into the war, he continued his resistance, but he found it difficult to avoid pessimism and, as is shown in portions of this chapter that it was necessary to omit, he was often unhappy. John Reed had reached a point at which he knew very well that he wanted revolution, but he was far from certain that the working class would ever be ready to overthrow capitalism. Just at this stage of his development, he went to Russia, arriving less than two months before the ten days that shook the world.

G. H.

THE METROPOLITAN for January, 1917, announced Reed's proposed trip to China: "He will hold up the mirror to this mysterious and romantic country and we shall see its teeming millions and the big forces at work there. Imagine Reed in this rich 'copy' empire—the man of whom Rudyard Kipling said, 'His articles in The Metropolitan made me see Mexico'." Reed and Louise Bryant, securing their passports and a stock of letters of introduction, made all their plans.

On January 22, 1917, Wilson delivered his famous speech advocating peace without victory. The next day Bethlehem Steel announced a two-hundred-percent stock dividend. A week later, Count Bernstoff informed the United States government that Germany was about to engage in virtually unrestricted submarine warfare and on February 3, the President announced the severing of diplomatic relations. That week Hovey wrote Reed that under the circumstances it seemed unwise to spend money on articles about China. "Whigham and I," he said, "think that we had best put off consideration of your trip to China until we can see more clearly ahead. Meanwhile, is there anything in connection with the new situation you can suggest that we could do in place of it?"

There was nothing. The abandoning of the trip to China meant the end not only of one of Jack Reed's romantic dreams but also of a very substantial reality, his profitable employment by The Metropolitan. Roosevelt's policies had come more and more to dominate the magazine; socialism was forgotten and only preparation for war mattered. Whigham and Hovey had been, all things considered, uncommonly liberal, but they were responsible for a business enterprise with a heavy investment and growing profits and there were limits to their tolerance. Art Young had been called from Washington and asked to talk over with them his monthly letter and he knew that the end was near. Reed had been perfectly outspoken. He had said to Whigham, "You and I call ourselves friends, but we are not really friends because we don't believe in the same things and the time will come when we won't speak to each other. You are going to see great things happen in this country pretty soon. It may kill me and it may kill you and all your friends, but it's going to be great." After that, Whigham and Hovey realized that, for all his talents, John Reed was a liability to The Metropolitan unless a way could be found for him to utilize those talents in a corner of the world that presented no issues on which Metropolitan readers felt deeply. When they decided that they could not send him to romantic and remote China, they knew that he was no longer useful to the magazine.

There was a brief interval before the actual break, but nothing that Reed wrote appeared in The Metropolitan. He did an article on Samuel Gompers, a discreet article, careful neither to discredit organized labor nor to offend the A. F. of L., but at the same time intended to expose the inadequacies of Gompers' leadership. It was a painstaking piece of work, with a documented account of Gompers' life and the growth of the Federation. In the sections that described Gompers' speech to the striking garment workers and his conversation with Reed, it had some of the restrained irony that made Reed's article on Billy Sunday so effective. But on the whole it was weak because Reed could not say what he thought and could only hint at his real criticisms of the reformist bureaucrat. Hovey and Whigham were right: John Reed was no longer a Metropolitan asset.

He was slowly realizing that a decision had been forced upon him. For four years he had taken the side of the workers in their struggle against exploitation and he had become known as a radical; but radicalism had been only one of a vast number of interests. Now, in the months when the United States prepared for entrance into the war, he understood that, if he was to be a radical at all, revolutionary change must be, if not his only interest, at least the center of his life. He told a friend that henceforth he would write nothing that did not express his hatred of capitalism, nothing that did not aid the cause of revolution. He was still a poet, but a poet whose immediate task was something other than the writing of poetry.

THE pacifists had begun their frantic struggle to prevent the declaration of war, but Reed, though he took part in it, knew that it came too late. Bernstorff had left and the House had voted the largest naval appropriations bill in history. LaFollette had killed the armed-ship bill in the Senate, but Wilson had proceeded to arm merchantmen without Congressional authority. The pro-Ally partisanship that Reed had deplored was fast becoming hysteria. More and more clergymen joined Newell Dwight Hillis, S. Parkes Cadman and Henry Van Dyke in preaching a holy crusade against the Huns. College presidents vied with one another in the coining of epithets for the Kaiser. The liberals were hastening to get in line. The editors of The New Republic had decided that, in Floyd Dell's phrase, "a war patronized by The New Republic could not but turn out to be a better war than anyone had hoped."

Reed kept on fighting. "I know what war means," he wrote in The Masses and The Call.

> I have been with the armies of all belligerents except one, and I have seen men die, and go mad, and lie in hospitals suffering hell; but there is a worse thing than that. War means an ugly mob-madness, crucifying the truth-tellers, choking the artists, side-tracking reforms, revolutions, and the working of social forces. Already in America those citizens who oppose the entrance of their country into the European melee are called "traitors," and those who protest against the curtailing of our meager rights of free speech are spoken of as "dangerous lunatics."

Whose war is this?—he asked, and answered—

> Not mine. I know that hundreds of thousands of American workingmen employed by our great financial "patriots" are not paid living wages I have seen poor men sent to jail for long terms without trial, and even without any charge. Peaceful strikers, and their wives and children, have been shot to death, burned to death, by private detectives and militiamen. The rich have steadily become richer, and the cost of living higher, and the workers proportionally poorer. These toilers don't want war—not even civil war. But the speculators, the employers, the plutocracy—they want it, just as they did in Germany and England; and with lies and sophistries they will whip up our blood until we are savage and then we'll fight and die for them.

Reed, like most radicals, took some consolation in the overthrow of the Czar, but he was not deceived into believing that a significant transfer of power had taken place. He described it as a revolution created by

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intellectuals, business men and army officers, for the purpose of better organizing Russian capitalism and more efficiently carrying on the war. For this reason it had the approval of the commercial interests of the allied countries. He saw a possibility that it might open the way for a genuine revolution by the workers and farmers, but he scoffed at the idea that any particular importance could be attached to the abdication of the Czar and the consequent change in the form of government.

For the moment, Russia was less important than the last desperate fight against participation in the war. Now that it had become certain that President Wilson would call for a declaration of war, the pacifists could scarcely believe that what they had dreaded was at hand. Thousands of them poured into Washington as Congress opened, most of them frightened and confused, but still hoping. Reed joined them. LaFollette gave him a pass to the Senate and John M. Nelson, who also was to vote against the war resolution, a pass to the House.

But on the evening of April 2, when Wilson was addressing the joint session of Congress, Reed was not present. He was at a meeting held under the auspices of the People's Council, a meeting to which thousands of pacifists and radicals had come from all over the East. The more liberal members of the committee had asked him to speak, but he feared that, as a radical, he would be denied the chance. Alice Potter, who had helped with the Paterson pageant and had been his strongest supporter in his project for a workers' theater, offered a suggestion. With his approval, she assigned loyal friends to places throughout the hall and gave them their instructions.

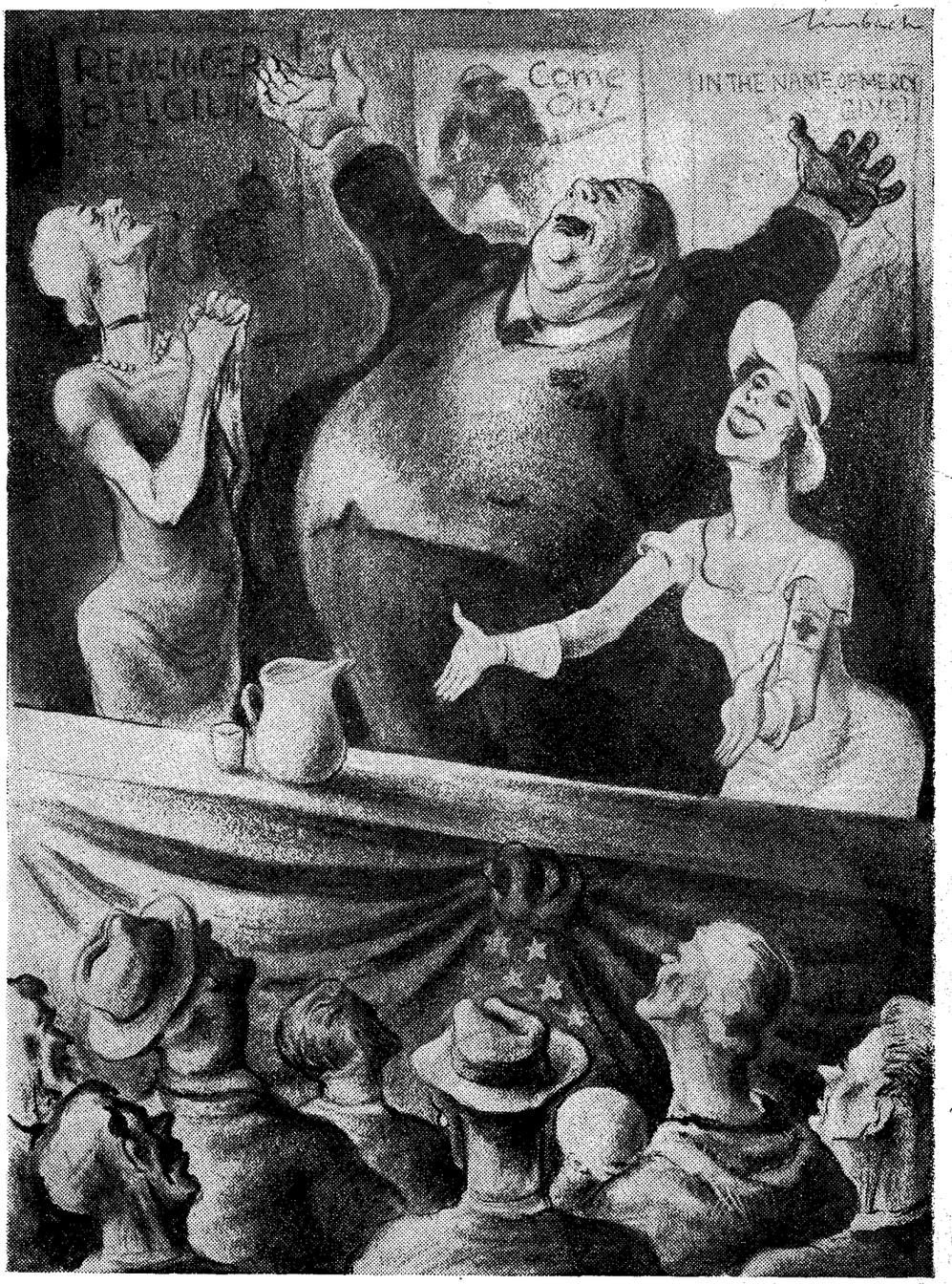
When, as the hour grew late and Reed had not yet been called on, he gave her a signal, she rose and waved her handkerchief. Instantly there were cries from all over the hall, "We want Jack Reed!" David Starr Jordan, who was presiding, rose and said, "We will come to Mr. Reed in due time." Another speaker was introduced and went on and on with meaningless phrases. Alice Potter again waved her handkerchief and again the cries came for Jack Reed. "Mr. Reed will speak if there is time," Dr. Jordan announced.

As the clamor continued, a man entered the back of the hall and walked rapidly to the platform. Everyone was silent. The man reached the platform and they all, knowing well what they were to hear, gasped as he briefly told them that the President had called for war. Dr. Jordan rose, saying in effect, "We were for peace, but we will follow our country." There were cries of "Jack Reed," cries that were repeated throughout the audience. "There is no time," Jordan said. The cries grew more and more insistent. Reed rose, stepped forward, raised his hand and said, "This is not my war and I will not fight in it. This is not my war and I will not support it. This is not my war and I will have nothing to do with it." One man had refused to equivocate and courage sprang up again in hundreds of hearts.

Outside on the street, Reed bought an extra and read the eloquent phrases of the President's message:

> We must put excited feeling away. . . . We will not choose the path of submission and suffer the most sacred rights of our nation and our people to be ignored or violated. The wrongs against which we now array ourselves are not common wrongs: they cut to the very root of human life. . . . Our object . . . is to vindicate the principles of peace and justice in the life of the world. . . . We have no quarrel with the German people. . . . A steadfast concert for peace can never be maintained except by a partnership of democratic nations. . . . Only free peoples can hold their purpose and their honor steady to a common end and prefer the interests of mankind to any narrow interest of their own. . . . We are now about to accept gauge of battle with this natural foe to liberty and shall, if necessary, spend the whole force of the nation to check and nullify its pretensions and its power. . . . If there be disloyalty it will be dealt with a firm hand of stern repression. . . . The day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace she has treasured. God helping her, she can do no other.

Wilson's high moral tone sickened Reed and he fought to break through the fog of hypocrisy. He remained in Washington in order to testify at the House judiciary committee hearings on the espionage bill. He advanced, necessarily, the usual liberal arguments, reenforced by his own observations in the belligerent countries. At the hearing on the conscription bill, however, which took



"GIVE 'TIL IT HURTS" — *Russell T. Limbach*

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place two days later, he definitely committed himself. After describing conscription as undemocratic, he set forth the case for persons like himself who, without religious scruples against war in general, opposed this particular war. "I am not a peace-at-any-price man," he said, "or a thorough pacifist, but I would not serve in this war. You can shoot me if you want and try to draft me to fight—and I know that there are ten thousand other people—"

Representative Greene of Vermont interrupted: "I do not think we need to hear this gentleman any further," and Representative Kahn of California added, "That kind of a man is found in every country, but we should be thankful that the country does not depend on them." But the chairman insisted that Reed should be heard and he went on, reporting observations in England, France and Bulgaria. When he paused, Kahn ominously asked him for his address.

Representative Shallenberger inquired why he would not fight and Reed said that his experiences on five fronts and in the capitals of most of the warring nations had convinced him that it was a commercial conflict.

"I think," said the chairman, "Mr. Shallenberger wanted you to state your personal reasons."

"I was trying to state them."

"It is not your personal objection to fighting?" Shallenberger asked.

"No," said Reed, "I have no personal objection to fighting. I just think that the war is unjust on both sides, that Europe is mad and that we should keep out of it."

What Reed did was no more than many others were doing, but such consistency had, nonetheless, become a rare virtue. And as the anti-war forces dwindled away, he found it difficult to keep from discouragement. It was easy enough to be personally brave, but it was difficult to find any basis for hope. The action of the emergency national convention of the Socialist Party in adopting a resolution against war helped a little to restore his faith in the party, but he was disgusted by the prompt desertion of such men as J. G. Phelps Stokes, Allan Benson, John Spargo, William English Walling and Harry Slobodin.

Of course his more respectable associates had already begun to shun him. He met a group of Harvard acquaintances in Washington and they were obviously uncertain whether to speak to him or not. Finally, with marked embarrassment, they shook his hand and went on with their talk about the war. "If I had the job of popularizing this war," one of them said, "I would begin by sending three or four thousand American soldiers to certain death. That would wake the country up." It reminded Reed of the day, a few weeks earlier, when he had overheard a young Plattsburger discussing in the Harvard Club the sinking of an American ship. "I must confess," the Plattsburger had drawled, "that my ardor was somewhat dampened when I read that one of the victims was a Negro."

Harry Reed had already volunteered. "I have done this," he wrote his brother, "because I consider it my duty, not because I want to be a soldier or fight. I wish you could see a little more clearly just what the situation is in this country and how useless it is to try to buck what can't be changed." Mrs. Reed wrote, "It gives me a shock to have your father's son say that he cares nothing for his country and his flag. I do not want you to fight, heaven knows, for us, but I do not want you to fight against us, by word and pen, and I can't help saying that if you do, now that war is declared, I shall feel deeply ashamed. I think you will find that most of your friends and sympathizers are of foreign birth; very few are real Americans, comparatively."

Reed was sorry to offend his mother, but he would not give up the fight. The New York Call printed his open letter to the members of Congress, attacking conscription in essentially the same words he had used before the committee on military affairs. He signed the call for an American Conference for Democracy and Terms of Peace. And he contributed more voluminously than ever to The Masses: an article in praise of La Follette's fight against the armed-ship bill, a discussion of the progress of the Russian revolution, an attack on Charles Edward Russell. In a note called "Flattering Germany," he wrote, "if it is continually flung in our faces that any man who speaks for freedom and justice is therefore pro-German, perhaps we'll come to believe it after a while." And in "The Great Illusion" he said, "It is the power of money that rules all countries, and has for many years. It is a cold economic force that fanned the fires which burst out in this war. The issue is clear, with these forces there is no alliance, for peace or war. Against them and their projects is the only place for liberals."

He continued to write a great deal for The Masses. In "The Myth of American Frankness" he wrote, "We are a rich, fat, lazy, soft people, we Americans. This characterization of us was invented by that prize exaggerator, Theodore Roosevelt, when he was press-agenting preparedness, and wanted to explain why the nations of the world would all invade the United States." Wilson, he went on, had now borrowed the slogan, "as usual adopting Teddy's idea three years late." After giving figures to show that the rich had grown richer during the war and the poor poorer, Reed said, "We agree with Messrs. Root, Vanderlip, and Wood that the fat should be sweated, that the lazy should be forced to work. We even go so far as to venture an opinion that if those who could afford it should be forced to pay for this war, there would soon be peace. Meanwhile it is perfectly useless, we suppose, to remind these gentlemen that there is a limit to human endurance, even among a people as long suffering as Americans." He quoted "our anarchist contemporary," The Wall Street Journal, "We are now at war, and militant pacifists are earnestly reminded that there is no shortage of hemp or lamp-posts," and informed the gentlemen of Wall Street that, if they were not careful, they might find themselves on the wrong end of the rope.

In briefer notes in the same issue, that for July, he commented on Gompers' support of the war, listed some of the grosser attacks on freedom of speech and ridiculed the plan of the so-called "first fifty" to help the war by reducing luncheons to three or four courses and dinners to five or six. He quoted Thomas Jefferson's remark, "The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is the natural manure," and commented, "I submit that the tree of liberty being now very greatly in need of refreshments, there are a few 'patriots' about ripe for slaughter," going on to list the profits of the coal trust, the railroads, the munition makers, and the manufacturers of flags.

In the August issue, under the title "Militarism at Play," he began, "We always used to say that certain things would happen in this country if militarism came. Militarism has come. They are happening." He described the systematic disruption of a meeting of the American Conference on Democracy and Terms of Peace. Hundreds of secret service men, some of them trying to disguise themselves as delegates, had been aided by soldiers and sailors sent to the meeting by their commanding officers. He also described the breaking up of Emma Goldman's anti-conscription meeting, the raid on Socialist headquarters in the Twenty-sixth Assembly district and the invasion of a meeting at Arlington Hall. "Just wait, boys," he warned, "until the crowd finds that clubs and butts and even bayonets, don't hurt so much, and that there are too many heads to crack."

It was inevitable, of course, that The Masses should be barred from the mails, along with fourteen other periodicals. "In America," John Reed wrote in the September issue, "the month just passed has been the blackest month for freedom our generation has known. With a sort of hideous apathy the country has acquiesced in a regime of judicial tyranny, bureaucratic suppression and industrial barbarism, which followed inevitably the first fine careless rapture of militarism." Describing the conviction of Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman, the attack of soldiers and sailors upon a Socialist parade in Boston, the driving of Arizona strikers into the desert and the railroading of Tom Mooney, he pointed out that "law is merely the instrument of the most powerful interest and there are no Constitutional safeguards worthy the powder to blow them to hell."

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"Meanwhile," he observed, "organized labor lies down and takes it—nay, in San Francisco, connives at it. Gompers is so busy running the war that he has time for nothing except to appoint upon his committees labor's bitterest enemies. I suppose that as soon as Tom Mooney and his wife are executed, Gompers will invite District Attorney Fickert to serve upon the Committee on Labor."

He also wrote an article for The Seven Arts, "This Unpopular War." It said little that he had not said before, but it impressively brought together the observations he had made and expressed the emotions that had been roused in him in the trenches, behind the lines and in the cities of the warring nations. Everywhere he had been convinced that the masses of people did not want to fight; even in war-mad Amer he saw signs of an opposition that dare not express itself. How the people had been led to battle against their own commo ense judgments, why they had let thems es be betrayed, he could not explain. I only knew that, if they had been left them-selves, there would have been no r and that even at the moment, after t' e years of adroit pressure from schools churches, newspapers, the masses, if they would have their way, would end the war.

In August, 1917, three years after his departure for the Western Front, Reed had no idea what he would do. He had deliberately thrown away his reputation with the editors of the paying magazines. He might at any moment be sent to prison because of what he had written against the war. None of this would have bothered him if he had been certain that out of the horrors of war would come the glories of revolution, but his faith in the working class was shaken. And then, on less than a week's notice, he sailed for Russia.

Three Poems

STANLEY BURNSHAW

For a Workers' Road-Song

Strange that this ripple of birds we hear
Has always sung in the May of the year
Over the road where thousands pass
In the warm ripe wind that lifts from grass.

But stranger that we should have a thought
For a bird or the smell that a branch has brought,
Who give our strength at a wheel that yields
Each day new weapons to ruin fields.

Toward Outer Air

Within the sheds on burning days men move
Fiercely; nothing waylays
The taut force that pulls their minds away
From the dead objects in their hands, tainting
Blood with relentless desire.

Riveters, grapplers, welders leave their stations
For any handy reason
To loiter toward the cool sheds where spare-parts
Of made machines are painted
By strong lithe women bending with wide brushes.

They scan these girls, full-bosomed, tall, fevered
With the daily chords of motion; and they watch
To see some part of their bodies' curving outline
For eyes to dream upon or feed their fancy
Food for the longing tumbling through their limbs . . .
And the slow-answering girls
Look at the staring men to say they know
What hungers ravage them, and drop their brushes,
Mouth some silly words,
And wait silently while the men stare on.

—One afternoon when a fierce sun had burned
Fiercer than ever, when its beam had pressed down
Through roofs to stuff the blood with an insane heat
That lashed all millhands into a savage urge
To clutch at their tools, to cut clean down to the heart
Of steel—one afternoon
One of the girls feeling men's eyes and the sun's
Suddenly reeled in terrified need—something
Tearing inside at her breast—cascading fire
Through her body—crushing her mind,
Setting her head in flames . . . Half-wild she ran
Outside and past the yards. Then one of the men
Whose pitiless eyes had been stalking hers leaped out,
Ran with her to a field—at last to drown
Their choking pain under the terrible sky.

Men in the sheds knew why these two had leaped
Beyond the yards and stayed, they also knew
When these two would return another person
Would tell them Cassanod was not for them.
And so after the sinners had come and gone
Each man stopped to wonder how near his instant . . .
When he too hounded in flesh or mind
Or will or hope might suddenly leap up, driven
In fury, burst from his tools,
From the walled-in-hours pulled by a sudden
Promise in outer air.

No Words

Reverence mercy by thriving day,
Worship tenderness when a soft bloom
Of night lowers—but know that these
Are guides of doom
Leading you slowly, helpless away
To a bleeding tomb.

In these dim hours of our slow emergent
Dream, hear the wild voice of the brave
Vanguard, striving with death, shouting
No words can save,
Struggle in all our blood commands you:
This war is love.

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An Answer to Ernest Boyd

A. B. MAGIL

The following reply to an article by Ernest Boyd in the December Atlantic Monthly was submitted to The Atlantic in response to a statement in the Contributors' Column of the magazine quoting Boyd to the effect that he "looks forward with real pleasure to a reply from some American Communist." The reply was returned to A. B. Magil with a note from Joseph Barber, Jr., managing editor of The Atlantic Monthly, which stated:

Your retort to Ernest Boyd is very much to the point, but we are already negotiating for a paper which presents substantially your material and position.

The January Atlantic contains no reply to Boyd, nor is any mentioned in the announcement of articles to appear in the February issue.

ABOUT half way through Ernest Boyd's article, "A Challenge to Communists" in the December Atlantic Monthly, I found myself facing the incredible conclusion that Mr. Boyd was in dead earnest. Though Communists are notoriously lacking in a sense of humor, I had been doggedly groping through Mr. Boyd's quixotisms for imperceptible playful innuendoes and double entendres when I came smack up against the realization that he really meant all that he was saying.

Perhaps he no longer means it all. Since his article was written "in the height of intellectual excitement," he may by now have cooled off sufficiently to have discovered that that type of inebriation is not always the mother of wisdom.

The Seventh World Congress of the Communist International seems to have got into Ernest Boyd's hair. But one might have expected that a man who in his own field of literature has felt it incumbent upon him to equip himself with the most rigorous scholarship to have shown sufficient respect for his readers to have found out what it's all about before presuming to lay down the law. Mr. Boyd, in fact, commits every sin that he accuses the Communists of: he is bad-tempered, doctrinaire, intolerant of ideas he does not agree with, snobbishly European in approach, ignorant apparently of American life beyond Union Square and so sectarian as to constitute a sect unto himself—it is hardly likely that there can be another literate person in the country who would share all the quirks of his peculiar intellectual petulance.

> The Comintern,—writes Mr. Boyd,—now graciously admits that there are other parties, other forces, which are concerned with the preservation of human liberty, and even goes so far as to permit its adherents to cooperate with this 'social-fascist,' 'petty-bourgeois' riffraff. A special Marxian dispensation now makes possible mixed political marriages for the purpose of presenting a united front to the common enemy.

The United Front may be a new discovery for Ernest Boyd, but not, of course, for the Communist International. That body addressed its first appeal to the Second (Socialist) International for a United Front not in 1935 or 1933, but in January, 1922. In April, 1922, in Berlin and in December, 1922, at The Hague, representatives of the Communist International, the Second International and the short-lived Two-and-a-Half International actually met to discuss common action.

The Communist International, however, makes no claim to having discovered the tactic of the United Front. It is at least as old as Marxism itself. Had Mr. Boyd read the *Communist Manifesto* a little more carefully, he would have learned that in 1848 the Communists in France allied themselves with the Social-Democrats (who corresponded not to the Socialists of our day, but to the present Radical-Socialists), in Switzerland with the Radicals and in Germany "they fight side by side with the bourgeoisie whenever it acts in a revolutionary way, against the absolute monarchy, the feudal squirearchy and the petty bourgeoisie."

The form of the United Front has changed with changing situations, but if "this decision of the Comintern to consort with unregenerate liberals and Socialists has been a bitter pill" for the American Communists, it's a pill that they have been swallowing for quite some time. Perhaps Mr. Boyd has faintly heard of the Scottsboro case.

This is not to imply that no changes were introduced by the recent Seventh World Congress of the Communist International. On the contrary, very important tactical changes were formulated which centered the activity of all Communist Parties on the creation of a united labor front and a people's front as a political coalition of all progressive forces against fascism and war. But these changes were in process of gestation during the past few years in the work of the Communist Parties of all countries, and did not spring fullgrown from the brow of Stalin at the recent congress, as some have implied.

FROM the United Front Mr. Boyd turns back the pages of history to "refute" what history has so abundantly confirmed: the discoveries and teachings of those two nineteenth century titans, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels.

> As is well known, the last thing in this world that Marx anticipated was Russian Marxism. He very naturally regarded England, France, and particularly Germany, as the most advanced industrial countries where his catastrophic view of history would be realized.

This is an ancient canard. It does not happen to be true. Marx and Engels, being social scientists, not crystal-gazers, made no dogmatic predictions as to the country or countries in which the social revolution would first be achieved. In fact, in later years they more and more reckoned with the possibility that the revolution would break out precisely in Russia and would, as they wrote in 1882 in the introduction to the second Russian edition of the *Communist Manifesto,* become "the signal for a workers' revolution in the West." And far from Russian Marxism being the last thing they anticipated, they wrote in the same introduction: "Russia forms the vanguard of Europe's revolutionary movement."

It was because they regarded the possibility of revolution in Russia so hopefully that in the Russo-Turkish War Marx and Engels favored the defeat of Russia as the bulwark of European reaction. "A Russian defeat," wrote Marx in a letter to Wilhelm Liebknecht on February 4, 1878, "would have greatly hastened the social revolution in Russia, for which the elements exist on a mass scale, and with it the revolution throughout Europe."

And on April 23, 1885, Engels wrote to the Russian revolutionist, Vera Zasulich:

> What I know or believe about the situation in Russia impels me to the opinion that the Russians are approaching their 1789. The revolution *must* break out there in a given time; it *may* break out there any day. In these circumstances the country is like a charged mine which only needs a fuse to be laid to it. . . .
>
> To me the most important thing is that the impulse should be given in Russia, that the revolution should break out. . . . There where the position is so strained, where the revolutionary elements are accumulated to such a degree, where the economic situation of the enormous mass of the people becomes daily more impossible, where every stage of social development is represented, from the primitive commune to modern large-scale industry and high finance, and where all these contradictions are violently held together by an unexampled despotism, a despotism which is becoming more and more unbearable to the youth in whom the national worth and intelligence are united—there, when 1789 has once been launched, 1793 will not be long in following.

History has brilliantly confirmed the predictions of Marx and Engels. Twenty years after Engels wrote his letter, the defeat of Russia in the war with Japan helped explode the charged mine and Russia's 1789 had begun. Another twelve years and the collapse of the Russian armies in the World War precipitated Russia's 1793, the revolution of March 1917, which developed beyond that

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point into the Commune—the Bolshevik Revolution of November, 1917, that lighted the flames throughout central Europe.

But Mr. Boyd has a trump card up his sleeve.

> In the Communist Manifesto of 1848 he [Marx] actually wrote that the bourgeois revolution in Germany will be but the prelude to an immediately following proletarian revolution, a statement which was as immediately disproved by the facts, and which has never been further from realization than at the present time.

This is the sort of piddling pettifoggery that Mr. Boyd substitutes for rational argument. If all his researches in the *Communist Manifesto* have yielded only this tidbit, he is welcome to his infinitesimal triumph which, with the acute hindsight of eighty-seven years, he pits against the monumental depth, brilliance and accuracy with which Marx and Engels in the *Manifesto* outlined the whole course of capitalist development.

The two founders of scientific socialism (Communism) overestimated, it is true, the pace of development of the revolution. But none were so quick to correct themselves as they; theirs was a living theory and key to action, not a petrified dogma. Following the defeat of the German bourgeois revolution as a result of the betrayal of the bourgeoisie itself, Marx, in his *Address to the Communist League* (1850), considered the possibility that "the German workers will only come to power and to the enforcement of their class interests after prolonged revolutionary development." In the same year, in their *Neue Rheinische Revue,* Marx and Engels, discussing the new development of capitalist productive forces that had been unloosed by the discovery of gold in California, came to the conclusion that during such a period "there can be no question of a real revolution."

But Mr. Boyd is evidently determined to prove his point: that the founders of scientific socialism were doctrinaire imbeciles who wrote such nonsense that even he can set them right.

> Characteristically, Friedrich Engels also pointed to the ill-fated Paris Commune of 1871 as an example of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' and declared that 'since 1789 Paris has been placed in such a position that no revolution could there break out without assuming a proletarian character,' this despite the fact that the revolution in question resulted in the founding of the bourgeois Third Republic.

This is a truly marvelous *non sequitur.* Mr. Boyd evidently determines the class character of a revolution by whether it succeeds or not. The proletarian revolution in Hungary in 1919, which set up a Soviet government, was followed, after the triumph of the counter-revolution, not by restoration of the monarchy, but by the creation of a regency. Ergo, the Hungarian revolution was not proletarian and the government it established was not Soviet. This is really a precious fathomless logic.

As a matter of fact, the French proletarian revolution of 1871 did not result "in the founding of the bourgeois Third Republic"; this was proclaimed September 4, 1870, six months *before* the birth of the Commune. It was the Third Republic that crushed the Commune.

Having thus disposed of Marx and Engels, Mr. Boyd next tries to discredit Marxism by revealing the idiocy of its alleged principles. What he actually reveals is his own uncanny talent for inept illustration. What else—unless it be ignorance—could have led him to select the nineteenth century vulgar political adventurer and pseudo-Marxist, H. M. Hyndman, *whom Marx and Engels consistently opposed,* as the symbol of the stultification and failure of Marxism?

This is the Hyndman whom Engels described in a letter to August Bebel, dated August 30, 1883, as "an arch-conservative and an extremely chauvinistic but not stupid careerist." And of Hyndman's Social-Democratic Federation Engels wrote (letter to Sorge, May 12, 1894) that it had succeeded "in reducing the Marxian theory of development to a rigid orthodoxy, which the workers are not to work their way up to by their own class feeling, but to swallow instantly without development, as an article of faith."

Thus the analogy which Mr. Boyd seeks to create between the Hyndmanites, whom he miscalls "the English Marxists of the eighties," and the present-day American Communists falls to the ground. Marx and Engels, be it noted, warred incessantly against sectarianism in the Socialist movements in Germany, England, the United States and elsewhere—as they did, too, against corroding opportunism. "Our theory is a theory of evolution," Engels wrote to Florence Kelley Wischnewetsky on January 27, 1887, "not a dogma to be learned by heart and to be repeated mechanically. The less it is drilled into the Americans from outside and the more they test it with their own experience—with the help of the Germans—the deeper it will pass into their flesh and blood."

WHEN Mr. Boyd comes to the question of classes and class consciousness in the United States, he uses what are ordinarily clear and explicit terms in so highly subjective and capricious a manner that he writes a language all his own.

"Class consciousness," he says, ". . . is a thoroughly non-American concept." That has a familiar ring. In fact, an old acquaintance that one meets in the Hearst press and similar authoritative sources. The difference between them and Mr. Boyd is that he really means it. Certainly there is no lack of class consciousness in Mr. Hearst himself. His is an aggressive, ostentatious class consciousness beside which that of the average British Tory is only a wraith.

> America is a middle-class republic and was created as such, and the outstanding feature of the country is the existence of one great bourgeois class, to which everybody belongs, whether rich or poor, (writes Mr. Boyd in all seriousness.) Some Americans have more money than others, but all hope to have as much as the next, not because a class privilege is thereby conferred on them, but because the making of money is the one career open to all.

This is written, astonishingly, in the year 1935 by a man who has had some reputation for being a liberal. It is true that some eleven or more million unemployed have found themselves excluded from the "all" for whom the career of "the making of money" is open. So, it would seem, have the overwhelming majority of the rest of our population, 71 percent of whom, according to government statistics, were even in the boom year of 1929 receiving less than $2,500 a year, which is considered the minimum for a decent standard of living.

But Mr. Boyd isn't troubled by that. No classes exist for him because "nobody except a class-conscious, semi-alien American has ever noticed any tendency on the part of the citizens of this country to draw aside from a man in overalls because he is not 'good enough' for them to associate with."

Last year I happened to be in Toledo during the height of the struggle of thousands of working people against the National Guard that developed out of the Electric Auto-Lite strike, and all I can say is that if there are no classes and no class consciousness in this country, then the workers of Toledo and the forces of so-called law and order gave an astonishing imitation of them. And so did the participants in the San Francisco general strike, as did the textile strikers, fifteen of whom went to their graves without appreciating the ineffable privilege of being shot down by people who did not disdain to rub elbows with them.

The trouble with Mr. Boyd is, first, that his eyes are so firmly glued on Union Square that he is unable to see America, and second, that he substitutes the conventions of the European *beau monde* for the objective criteria of the modern social sciences. But the world is, after all, not a drawing room, nor politics a cup of tea. Classes are social divisions that result from economic divisions—the relation of the various groups of society to the productive process. They exist everywhere throughout the world. Marx didn't discover them; that was done by the bourgeois forerunners.

Mr. Boyd's talk about "Russian-fed American Marxists" and "alien" character of those who disagree with his unique notions of classes and class consciousness grows a bit tiresome. Of course, being himself an alien, he is probably self-conscious on the subject and cannot be expected to understand too well native American Communism. I don't press this point since it must be admitted that of all countries, this is certainly the most "foreign." I don't think it should be held against the May-

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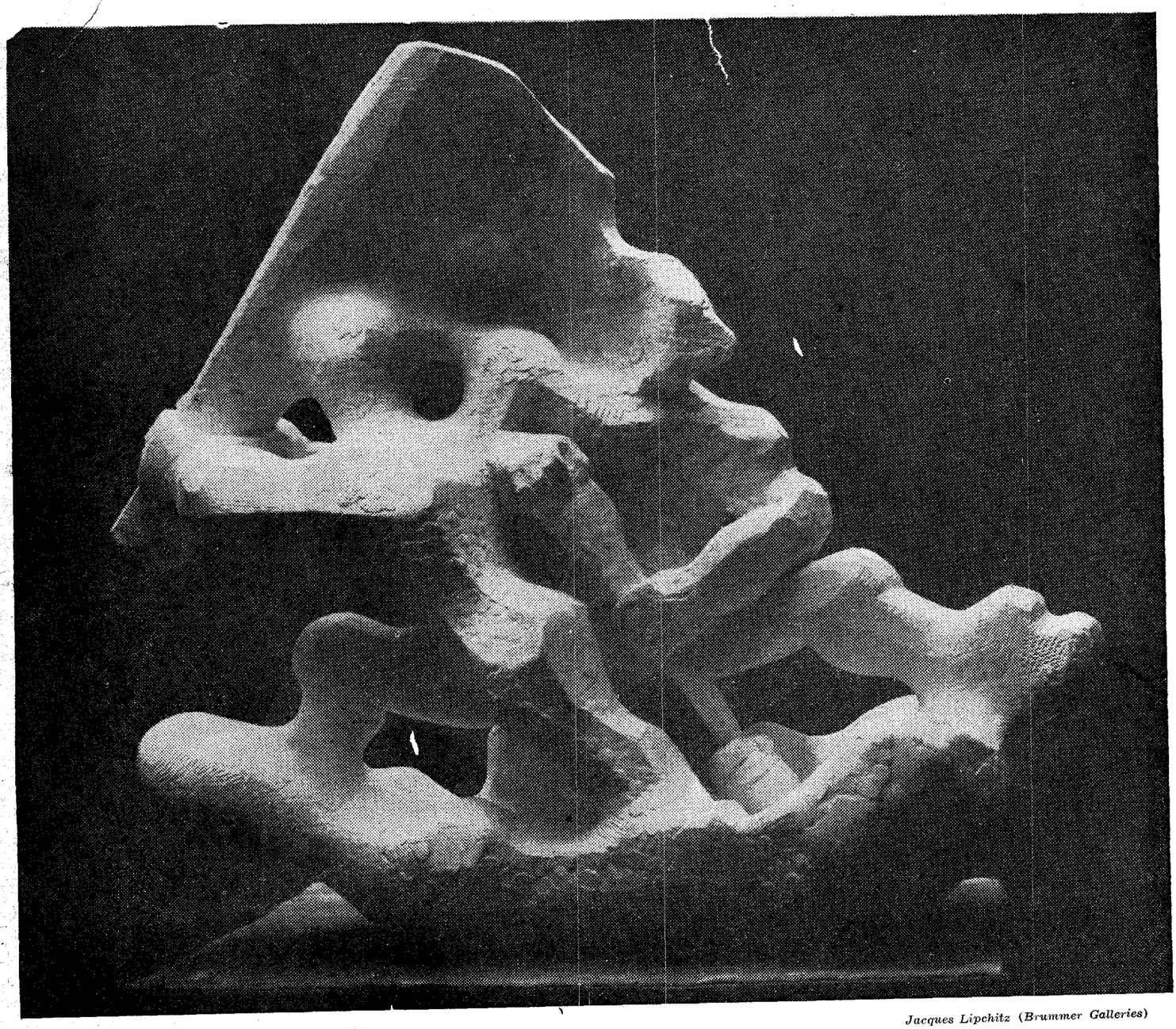

Jacques Lipchitz (Brummer Galleries)

TOWARDS A NEW WORLD

flower families that they are descended from immigrants.

Let us remember, too, how much our American Revolution owed to such as Tom Paine, Lafayette, Steuben, Pulaski, deKalb and Kosciusko. Fortunately, we had no Hearst at that time to demand the deportation of those aliens on the ground that they came here to foment revolution. And our independence might never have been won had it not been for the political, military and financial aid of Bourbon France. (The Revolutionary Fathers, being political realists, and not scholastics, did not disdain to utilize one wing of European reaction, France, against another, Britain.)

In other words, this nation was suckled on internationalism at birth. American Communists, whom Mr. Boyd accuses of being "Russian-fed," have no reason for feeling ashamed of the fact that they are in the line of the best revolutionary traditions of the American people: Thomas Jefferson certainly suffered no diminution in his stature as a superlatively great American because the Hamiltonian Tories flung at him the epithet: "Jacobin."

"Internationalism is in fact, in the bloodstream of all our history. It was here that some of the first Utopian Socialist colonies were founded. And here it was that seventeen years before Marx and Engels raised the slogan: "Workers of the world, unite," William Lloyd Garrison placed on the fighting banner of his Liberator the words: "Our country is the world—our countrymen all mankind."

And just as in our first Revolution foreign aid helped us snatch victory from the jaws of defeat, so it was in our second great crisis, the Civil War. But this time the aid was of a different kind—and that too is significant: the demonstrations of the English workers that forced the British ruling class to give up its plans for entering the war on the side of the South.

"Not the wisdom of the ruling class," Marx said in his Inaugural Address at the founding of the International Workingmen's Association (First International) in 1864, "but the heroic opposition of the English working class saved Western Europe from the disgrace of sending a military expedition for the perpetuation and extension of slavery on the other side of the ocean."

One of the first acts of the First International was to send a letter of support to Abraham Lincoln on the occasion of his reelection to the Presidency. And more than one Communist exile from European countries fought in the Northern armies during the Civil War. (Incidentally, the writings of Marx and Engels on our Civil War contain the most profound analysis of the forces and issues involved is that great conflict. How they estimated its significance may be

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judged from the statement in Marx's preface to the first edition of *Capital*: "As in the eighteenth century the American War of Independence sounded the tocsin for the European middle class, so in the nineteenth century the American Civil War sounded it for the European working class." Four years later these words were vindicated in the Paris Commune.)

Mr. Boyd points to Luther and Galileo as having "refused to follow the 'party line' of their time," and he issues the warning: "Russian Marxism will have to face innumerable Luthers and Galileos."

Again Mr. Boyd's analogy is not distinguished for its felicity. Luther and Galileo were rebels against the reaction of their time—just as are the Marxists today. Luther threw overboard the "party line" of the Catholic Church and substituted the "party line" of his theses. It does make a difference, Mr. Boyd, which "party line" one is for: George III's or Jefferson's, Hitler's or Stalin's.

And finally Mr. Boyd manages to get around to paying his respects to Soviet Russia.

> There is no reason why Communism as interpreted in Russia should apply to conditions in other countries, especially in view of the fact that a semi-Asiatic, almost wholly illiterate country, two centuries behind Western Europe, can hardly be conceived of as competent to instruct a French or a Scottish Communist as to how the Marxian Theory of Value can be made comprehensible to his own countrymen.

There is no more reason for that, Mr. Boyd, than for the fact that the law of gravitation as interpreted by Newton in England should apply to other parts of the world. The laws of Marx are not Russian or German, but universal, though in each country they apply in accordance with specific conditions.

As for Russia, Mr. Boyd does not seem to have caught up with it yet. That country happens to be at the present writing not "almost wholly illiterate," but some 90 or 95 percent literate; instead of being "two centuries behind Western Europe," it is first in Europe in industrial production (being second only to the United States on a world scale), first in trade union organization, and its literature, theater, music, cinema, art and educational system compare not unfavorably with those of any country—including our own. And certainly it appears to be some two centuries ahead of Western Europe—and for that matter of the U.S.A.—in the simple matter of providing jobs for all and the opportunity of a career not of making money, but of making life for each individual and for the nation as a whole deeper, fuller, more creative and beautiful.

All of which could, I have no doubt, be done a great deal better by us Americans since we would not be under the terrific handicap of starting from the bottom up. All we need is to get rid of capitalism.

COMMUNISTS are not supermen; but operating with the tools of science (Marx and Engels, Lenin said, "substituted science for dreaming"), they have a certain advantage over those who depend on eclectic impressionism to tell them where they and the world are going. It was a scientist, not a soothsayer, a Marxist named Joseph Stalin, who on May 6, 1929, at a time when there was a chicken in every pot and a car in every garage, was able to say:

> Many now think that the general crisis of capitalism will not affect America. That, of course, is not true. . . . The crisis of world capitalism is developing with increasing rapidity and cannot but affect American capitalism. The three million now unemployed in America are the first swallows indicating the ripening of the economic crisis in America.

Five months later came the crash.

And it was a scientist, a Marxist named Earl Browder, who in November, 1929, shortly after the Wall Street earthquake, at a time when all the star-gazers of capitalism had decided that it was only a minor tremor and prosperity would be here in sixty days, wrote:

> The Wall Street crash, wiping out 43 percent of all stock "values" of American corporations, was caused by a shaking in the economic foundations. In its turn it has deepened the cracks in the foundation and brought the entire capitalist system face to face with crisis, developing at a speed hitherto never witnessed. It is the first outstanding evidence of the beginning of a cyclical crisis of capitalism which, in the conditions of the present period, will become one of the most momentous economic cataclysms in the history of capitalism.

The great seminal ideas of Marx are creating a new world where all other ideas are dismally incapable of saving an old one. For all Mr. Boyd's frenetic archery, the Marxian Gulliver stands unscathed.

One gathers that Mr. Boyd is opposed to fascism. One gathers it tangentially, so to speak, since the whole weight of his argument is directed against Communism. Though he finds that The Daily Worker and THE NEW MASSES "devote their time to the defamation of every individual and every cause which has not been blessed by Stalin," the Communists really have no desire to compete with him in billingsgate. What we do passionately desire is to create the united front of all sincere opponents of fascism—including even so confused and anguished an obstructionist as Ernest Boyd.

The American Students Unite

CELESTE STRACK

COLUMBUS, O.

ON THE fourth floor of the Y.W.C.A., the National Student League convention ended. Five minutes later, the delegates from the Student League for Industrial Democracy rushed up from the third. Scores of students who had been milling impatiently in the halls and lounges for two days began to surge into the great hall. The steering committee consulted hurriedly. In ten minutes, the gavel descended. The first American Student Union convention had begun.

The hall in Columbus, Ohio, was a colorful mosaic. Sleepless N.S.L.ers and S.L.I.D.ers, whose busses had been delayed twenty-four hours in the bitter cold, compared notes on their respective conventions. "Ninety-odd voted for unity," an S.L.I.D. delegate could be heard whispering, "Only seven or eight abstained from voting and a similar number were against it."

Pioneers in the student movement, the N.S.L. and S.L.I.D. had as delegates students who helped to organize the first student strike in history — against news censorship at Columbia University. California students who stopped their fellows from scabbing during the West Coast strike were there. One could count a dozen delegates who had been suspended or expelled because of anti-war activities.

Five years had shifted and changed the forces in the student movement. Only three years ago two tiny conventions had signed the first joint-action pact between the N.S.L. and S.L.I.D, resulting in the peace strike of April, 1934. Soon after N.S.L. suggested amalgamation. The proposal had been taken, first as a joke, then as a subject for debate and finally as a practicable possibility. This summer the two national executive committees approved it. Agreement between the two conventions formed the basis for a new organization.

There were new faces everywhere. Seminary students concerned themselves with finding an acceptable ethical basis for the American Student Union. Student-body presidents and student editors brought the temper of the campus to the convention. Liberals tried to reconcile their philosophy with student action. Awakening social consciousness among American students was no invention of "wishful militants." While the American Student Union was meeting, the National Student Federation of

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America, a country-wide organization of student-body councils, was unanimously endorsing the American Youth Act, supporting the Nye-Kvale bill, declaring against Negro discrimination in education. The Student Volunteer Convention in Indianapolis, a meeting of three thousand exclusively Christian students, considered for the first time resolutions dealing with academic freedom and peace.

But among the A.S.U. students there were some peculiar faces. Grim, heavy-set men wearing American Legion buttons dotted the audience. A pasty-faced Hearst reporter flashed his observer's card and sidled in through the door. Pot-bellied, derbied plain-clothesmen tried to look inconspicuous. A frightened Y.W.C.A. board member assured us that there were G-men all over the building.

We had been honored with their attention long before the convention opened. Ten days before hundreds of delegates were due to arrive in Columbus, President Rightmire of Ohio State University took a look at the nationwide attack instituted by the Hearst newspapers, took a look at his board of trustees and then wrote the following letter:

> The University is experiencing a serious coal shortage. . . . We cannot now see any coal fund after January 1st. . . . The only course open to the University is to close all but the absolutely essential buildings. Unfortunately this renders it impossible to provide accommodations for the meeting of the Student Leagues which had been scheduled for the University during the holidays.

Ohio State University, it is true, did face a budget cut. The convention arrangements committee offered to pay for the coal, but President Rightmire "had nothing to say about that." By a most strange coincidence, President Rightmire discovered the coal shortage on the very day of the Hearst anti-student blast.

The arrangements committee rented halls in the downtown Y.W.C.A. Hearst howled to the world that the Y.W.C.A. board was infected with Communism. The American Legion demanded that we be evicted. For a time the convention's fate was in doubt. A special Y.W.C.A. board meeting was called. We were prepared to move again or to meet in the street, if necessary. But the courageous stand of a Y.W.C.A. secretary kept the building open for our meeting. Nevertheless, there was the constant menace of Hearst reporters, self-elected snoopers, detectives and thieves. Three men dashed up to the registration table, seized the registration lists and plunged down the stairs. Several students raced after them. One was caught and arrested, but the police refused to hold him. Not ordinary thieves, these. Our registration lists could hardly be converted into greenbacks. To us, of course, they were invaluable.

Two years ago letters and papers were taken from the N.S.L. convention and spread over the front pages of the Hearst chain. Last year the S.L.I.D. convention was the subject of a full-page tirade. But this time the attacks reached a new high. Hearst and his agents were frantic. They seemed to understand the implications of this meeting.

This was the first youth group in America to achieve organic unity between Socialists, Communists and liberals. The rapid coalition of progressive forces into a peoples' movement against war and fascism gained impetus. The presence of professors who spoke as members of the American Federation of Teachers, the talk by Leo Kryzcki, vice-president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, the endorsement of Francis Gorman, vice-president of the United Textile Workers of America, pointed to this.

Our preamble read:

> Because American students want peace;
> Because they, like their forefathers, are devoted to freedom and equality;
> Because they seek educational and economic security;
> And because present day society is increasingly denying them these elementary necessities, students in American high schools and colleges have formed a powerful alliance, an American Student Union.

The program elaborated these points and there was little disagreement. One problem only brought sharp debate—war and a program of action for peace. During this discussion the three major forces of the convention were visible: the National Student League, the Student League for Industrial Democracy and unaffiliated students or those representing other organizations. Argument centered around two points: the Oxford pledge (not to support any war conducted by the government of the United States) and the resolution introduced by Harold Draper of the S.L.I.D.

Almost every delegate was personally in favor of the Oxford pledge; disagreement was largely on the basis of tactics. For example, a delegate from New York University declared:

> It would be impossible to gain acceptance of a program including this pledge. Already repression against students is heavy; to insist upon the Oxford oath is to add fuel to the fire. The student body would not accept it.

He was answered by a southern delegate, from a Negro university:

> We are not attacked because of words we place or do not place in our platform. We are attacked because we work concretely for peace. If the Oxford Pledge draws fire from the reactionaries, it must be because they see in it a threat to their war plans. They must know it is more than an oath;—they must recognize it as a symbol that American students will fight against war before it breaks out and after. We can meet their opposition only by building so strong a peace movement around practical action that they cannot break us.

Delegates from several student councils opposed the oath on the grounds of expediency. One delegate from a women's school felt the girls there could not accept it yet. Although many of the independent delegates took the same position, agreement was finally reached on a three-point basis. (1) The inclusion of the Oxford pledge in the college platform; (2) its exclusion from or modification in the high-school program (delegates felt that recognition of high-school chapters by administrations would be important and that the pledge would handicap this fight); (3) agreement that the essence of the pledge and of the whole anti-war movement consisted in concrete, practical steps against militarism, against immediate war danger.

The Draper resolution initiated a sharper clash. A majority of the S.L.I.D. supported it. Draper explained it as a "concretization of the Oxford pledge." It selected three hypothetical war situations which the United States might face in the future and tried to blueprint the action that should be taken in each case—a highly theoretical question at best. A motion to consider it in its three separate parts was made and passed.

The first section dealt with a so-called "defensive" war in case of "invasion" of the United States by Japan. Robert Brown, delegate from the student council at City College, New York, voiced the general attitude toward this section:

> We have already pointed out in our program that we will not be fooled into accepting imperialist aggression by the United States under the guise of defense. However, although the section is repetitious, I don't object to it.

The second section took up a case in which the United States would attack Japan under the pretext of overthrowing her fascist government. Edward Alexander, Middle West N.S.L. organizer, explained:

> Well, I've been all over the Middle West in the last few months. I've been all over Columbus. I've been all over this building. Everywhere I hear students discussing war. But nowhere have I found one student who advocated such a war as this. However, just in case sometime, somewhere, I find such a person, it might be convenient to have this resolution. We may as well pass this section in case of emergency.

On the third section, however, there was fundamental disagreement. This paragraph stated that we would oppose participation by the government in any war (a statement equivalent to the Oxford pledge) but added to this pledge: *even if the United States government is allied with progressive, democratic or even with non-imperialist nations.* The debate centered about these italicized words which to most delegates seem to be a disguised attack on the peace policies of the Soviet Union and a basic misunderstanding of them.

A substitute action was introduced. It also opposed support of any war undertaken by the government and opposed voting for war credits or other military steps. But it went on to make these things concrete by pointing out the chief dangers in the world today—Italian, Nazi and Japanese aggression and it indicated the powerful influence of the Soviet Union for peace.

The delegate who introduced it stated: "We agree that what is needed is a concretization of the Oxford pledge. We do not, however, feel that Harold Draper's resolution achieves this. It is purely theoretical and negative in character. It does not deal with the

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major existing war dangers and offers no practical means of coping with them. For this reason we introduce a substitute third section as a real concretization of the Oxford pledge. It indicates how American students may undertake a positive fight against war."

Nancy Bedford-Jones and Al Hamilton of the Young Peoples Socialist League argued for the Draper resolution and against the substitute motion. In each case they seemed to feel that there was danger of the student movement suddenly advocating that the United States government take up arms if any one of three or four hypothetical situations came to pass.

Meanwhile, Serril Gerber presented the point of view of the Communist delegates: "Not only does the Draper resolution fail to do what it professes—to provide a concretization of the Oxford pledge—but it does something else.

> We feel that it is leveled not against the real war makers today—the Hearsts and du Ponts—but against what Mr. Draper *thinks* is the position of the Communists. We Communist students have already made clear, however, that we support the Oxford Pledge and are willing to take practical steps to concretize it. But we want a resolution that will really achieve this—not the Draper resolution. In our opinion the Soviet Union stands as a great international safeguard to peace, and a resolution which attacks its peace policies, openly or indirectly, is an aid, not to peace, but to the war makers. What we have to fight against is not some highly speculative alliance with the Soviet Union, but the very real war alliances directed against the Soviet Union. The relations between the United States and the Soviet Union are not static. They must become either more hostile—as Hearst wants—or friendlier—as we want. The implications of the Draper resolution are such that they bring grist to the mill of those who oppose friendlier relations between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Debate closed and a vote was taken. The Draper resolution lost; the second resolution was passed. The S.L.I.D. steering committee met hurriedly. Delegates held their breath. Would the new Union stand solid? The steering committee returned. "The S.L.I.D. delegates will remain in the American Student Union!" Cheers, wild applause, showed how deep and strong were the bonds of unity. Unity on an immediate program of action did not involve disregard of basic principles by those uniting, yet it was nevertheless possible. Christian students, Socialists, Communists, free lance liberals, had successfully mapped out a program to defend their interests.

Certainly a new maturity marks the American Student Union. Delegates were conscious that major battles lie ahead. We are passing the stage of minor skirmishes over an expulsion here, the R.O.T.C. there, a budget cut somewhere else. The very control of our educational system, the whole sweep of militarism in the schools, the basic right to an educational system are the fronts on which we will act. We face the leadership of not a few thousand students, but of hundreds of thousands and millions.

Correspondence

Where Not To Eat

To The New Masses:

The other day I received a sample copy of the French fascist magazine *Les Croix de Feu et Briscards* which is published in New York City. Its motto reads "Neither White nor Red," and it flaunts an emblem of a death skull and crossed swords. The organization makes a chauvinistic appeal to veterans and praises the terroristic French fascist leader, de la Rocque. Because readers of The New Masses might unwittingly be patronizing supporters of this reactionary, anti-democratic paper, I am listing for their information restaurants whose advertisements appear in *Les Croix de Feu:*

Janet of France	237 West 52nd St.
Larre's French Rest.	50 West 56th St.
Charles'	157 East 55th St.
La Chaumiere	163 East 50th St.
Bal Tabarin	225 West 46th St.
Maurice's	132 East 61st St.
L. H. Bonat	330 East 51st St.

New York City. Henri Courtneige.

$1.50 for an Eight-Hour Day

To The New Masses:

On December 27, 1935, the Committee in Support of Southern Miners received the following letter from a striking coal miner in Kettle Island, Kentucky.

"To the Committee in Support of Southern Miners: Conditions which prevail at Kettle Island, Kentucky, are unbearable. Three hundred and fifty miners of the Pioneer Coal Company are striking for better conditions and increase in wages. These miners who belong to Local Number 3251 of the United Mine Workers of America have been on strike since last May. They receive from $75 to $100 every ten days from the U. M. W. A. This amount, when divided among so many hungry miners does not amount to much and leaves the miners in a very bad condition.

"About 75 of the striking miners have gone to work for the P. W. A. where coolie wages are paid. $1.50 for eight hours of hard labor in the mud and snow. These union miners are tasting the fruits of the New Deal with empty bellies and half frozen bodies, trying to eke out enough to save their half-starved families from dying from flux, flu and other diseases which always follow in the wake of starvation.

"These P. W. A. workers are trying to organize and demand better conditions and wages.

"Could you friends of the Committee, up North help us out in any way?"

We appeal to the readers of The New Masses, who are able to donate clothing or offer any other assistance to please communicate with Mrs. Agnes Moore, 39 East 10th St., New York City. Tel. STuyvesant 9-2193.

Committee in Support of Southern Miners.

"Sorry, Mr. Hearst"

To The New Masses:

This is a belated but hearty congratulations on the excellence of the anti-fascist number. I must say that "The German Girls! The German Girls!" by Archibald MacLeish is the most tragic—the most powerfully beautiful poem I have ever read, and the first that ever moved me to tears!

I would like to know if there is a possibility of Spivak's articles on Germany being published in pamphlet form? If so, I should certainly send some of them to many people not yet familiar with the characteristic odor of fascism in full bloom.

I must add that I believe you to be one publication faithful to the real welfare of the American people — and this comes from one (sorry, Mr. Hearst!) whose ancestors fought in all the wars from the Revolutionary War on down and whose great-grandparents were among the first to have the courage to cross the continent to the West in a covered wagon.

So I know my Constitution, including the part about our having the right to overthrow the government when it ceases to provide its people with "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Yours for a future with no boundaries and the uniting of all peoples for "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" that does not know war.

New York City. Helen Robinson.

He Stole His Own Cotton

To The New Masses:

Pierce White, a white sharecropper from Lafayette, Chambers County, Alabama, has been the victim of one of the most flagrant frame-ups under the Rural Rehabilitation Administration. Two and one-half months ago he was sentenced to six months in the penitentiary for selling 200 pounds of seed cotton that he raised. His crime was "stealing" his own cotton.

White had sold some of his seed cotton to get food for his family. Vernon Jennings, field foreman of the Rehabilitation Administration in Chambers County, had a grudge against White because

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Vice President United Textile Workers of America

NORMAN THOMAS
Executive Director of League for Industrial Democracy

ROBERT MINOR
Cartoonist and Journalist

FRANCIS A. HENSON
Executive Secretary, Committee in Aid of Refugees from Nazism

LE ROY BOWMAN, Chairman
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White had protested against some of the graft and discrimination carried on by Jennings. When Pierce White was arrested Jennings went around telling people not to sign any bail bond for him and succeeded in stopping White from organizing a proper defense.

Under the Rehabilitation set-up the Government is supposed to rent the land for the person and furnish all equipment and supplies which are to be paid for out of the cash crop. What has happened in White's case is this: the three bales of cotton he raised were taken by Jennings and now Jennings has taken White's steer (work animal), fertilizer distributor, plow stock and tools, scooter, scrapes and gear and, to top it all, Paul Martin, Federal Land Agent, has ordered Mrs. White to vacate the house.

After Pierce White had gone to jail, Jennings came and asked his wife if she needed the rest of the crop. She said she did. After it was gathered she had six gallons of syrup, about ten bushels of potatoes and about fifty bushels of corn. Jennings threatened to chisel in on the corn. This, plus the one-half gallon of milk a day that a scrawny cow yields, is all Mrs. White has for the winter. There are no food allowances from the Rehabilitation Administration any more, so Mrs. White and her four little girls, the oldest is five years old and the youngest four months, will have a very "healthy" diet; especially Mrs. White who is pregnant.

The Share Croppers Union is taking up this case and has written to Mercer Evans of the Rural Resettlement Labor Relations Division and Phillip Weltner, Regional Director of the Rural Resettlement Administration, demanding that they take immediate steps to free Pierce White, to stop the eviction of the White family and to supply them with adequate food. At the same time the Share Croppers Union is demanding an investigation of Field Foreman Jennings who has been robbing all the white and Negro farmers on the Rehabilitation farms.

This attack on Pierce White, a white farmer, has other significance. The rich landlords are beginning to crack down on the poor whites, too, harder than ever, in order to squeeze out the last inch of profit. Another reason is that the Union has exposed the landlords so well that the landlords cannot use the poor whites to form lynch mobs and the mass basis for lynch terror against Negroes is going to pot.

Birmingham, Ala. TOM BURKE.

"Repression of Art in America"

TO THE NEW MASSES:

One of the major topics that will be discussed at the opening of the First American Artists Congress at Town Hall in New York City, February 14, will be "Repression of Art in America." Artists from all parts of the United States, among them many whose work is familiar to readers of THE NEW MASSES, will assemble for this meeting.

Cases of suppression and destruction of art works in the United States during the last two years will be cited and wherever possible the artists themselves will describe the attacks upon their works. Reinforcing their position against war and fascism which they took when they signed the Call to the congress, the artists will show how these cases are the direct outcome of the general rise of reactionary and fascist tendencies.

Lou Block who was associated with Ben Shahn on the Rikers Island mural project will review the events leading up to the rejection of their work by the Municipal Art Commission for its alleged "anti-social" nature. Joe Jones will tell of the actions of the vigilantes against his St. Louis murals and Murray Hantman will describe how the Los Angeles police smashed his frescoes with sledge hammers. Other cases such as the attack on the anti-war mural of Gilbert Wilson by the American Legion in Terre Haute will be shown.

This meeting, which will open the Congress, promises to be one of the high lights of the sessions and is open to the public.

STUART DAVIS, Secretary,
New York City. American Artists' Congress.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

By Way of Review

WHAT is Marxist criticism? The question is asked frequently as if the answer could be given in the same way as the answer to a simple question of fact, like what is the capital of the United States? or how many pounds in a ton? And it is answered, on the other hand, too often as if it were a mystery that requires a special vocabulary and a special system of logic. Perhaps it will require all that to express the full development which, however, it has certainly not yet achieved. Perhaps we will have a long time to wait for that full development; but in the meanwhile, if we merely wait, we ourselves will be arresting its development. Since the question has several times been asked of me in letters sent to THE NEW MASSES, I will attempt a partial answer at least on the question of Marxist reviewing in a way that happens to be easier for me than a point-blank definition. What I will try to do will be to show the processes I, who like to think of myself as a Marxist reviewer and am apparently so considered by at least the opponents of Marxist reviewing, go through in writing a review.

I will take for my subjects two books which I have recently looked into and which I think especially suitable for the purpose since they cannot be given any straight black or white treatment. One is Lady Murasaki's *The Tale of Genji,* translated by Arthur Waley and recently reissued from an expensive six volume edition, in a two volume edition ($5) by Houghton Mifflin Co. The other is Admiral Byrd's account of his second antarctic expedition in the book *Discovery* recently published by G. P. Putnam's Sons ($3.75).

The Tale of Genji is not only a Japanese classic; it is a world classic. It is a romantic novel told very beautifully by one of the simplest and most effective methods I have seen used—that of concentrating upon the expression of the mood most suitable to the situation the character is in, the aloofness, let us say, of a neglected wife, the patience of a lower-class mistress, the loyalty of a retainer, the anxiety of an ambitious courtier. These astutely selected characteristics are so carefully and fully developed that they come to contain the whole life. The figures in the book are based on personages of the Japanese court of the late tenth and early eleventh century, a period notable for its extreme refinements. The life described is gorgeous and full of pageantry. One reviewer said of it that if only the descriptions of the costumes had survived it would be enough to make it a masterpiece. In the sensitiveness and psychological strains depicted, climaxed by pilgrimages to shrines and renunciations of the world as the offset to intrigues and delicate adulteries, a civilization is shown, according to some reviewers, that had reached a maximum point of sophistication; and in making this point some of the reviewers suggested what have seemed to me rather far-fetched analogies with the work of Proust. The tone of the book, for all its parade, is melancholy. There can be felt in it the irritations and boredom of the surfeited and the nervousness of people bound in court intrigue so tight that words and gesture become critical.

This is what I would have written and did write, though more elaborately, when I was reviewing the book as it came out, volume by volume, several years ago. Writing about the book now, as a Marxist I would say all that, less elaborately, but add some other considerations. I would, in the first place, read Mr. Waley's preface for other purposes than quotation. I would do a little reading beside in the history of the period of which the book is a record as well as a literary glory.

Briefly, I would have this to add, that *The Tale of Genji* reflects the decline of an epoch; it is a picture of decadence, and its melancholy as well as its sophistication derives from that fact. The aristocratic civilization of this epoch was limited to an extremely small, privileged class. It had withdrawn so far from the Japanese people that it had rejected the national language as a vehicle for literature. Only the despised sex, women, wrote in the vernacular. The men wrote in classic Chinese, the study of which was regarded as an impropriety even for an empress. As a result an amazing proportion of the Japanese literary classics is the work of women. The work of the men of the period is mere scholarly rubbish. It is the consciousness of being in an unnatural situation that seems to account for so much of the neurasthenia portrayed in the book. Many of the characters droop into illnesses the descriptions of which are clear symptoms of nervous breakdown. Morbid pride has a balance in morbid unease, in premonitions of disaster. Dipping into our history we find the source of this uneasiness. A class of border nobles was rising into power and was looking at the court with challenging arrogance. A generation or so later the brilliant court pageant crumples up and disappears. A new class of feudal nobility is in power.

There are, besides, other elements in the book which went unnoticed but which, to a Marxist, are of great interest. The book has a remarkable, self-contained quality. Its little world is quite complete. If one examines it one finds that its assumption of its divine right to its luxurious life is flawless. Rarely do any of the rulers utter the ordinary official hypocrisies about the welfare of "our people." The people, in fact, are scarcely even an item in the background. On the rare occasions when the exigencies of the story compel the author to introduce peasants and fishermen, her sure pen fumbles. There is more than mere ignorance in the characterizations. There is fright. These fellowmen of hers affect her like huge animals. Shudderingly she represents them so. A social system in which the ruling class comes to such an unnatural relationship with the people it rules could obviously not maintain itself long. It is no surprise that it perished.

Such a commentary may slightly alter judgments upon a book. To establish that a book is the product of a ruling class and represents it alone, that it leaves the greater part of the life of its time untouched, does delimit its boundaries. We know then that we can view the book as a picture of Japanese life only in a restricted sense. But in essentials the esthetic judgment is unaltered. Through such a treatment nothing is subtracted and something is added. Accurate points of social reference are fixed; and its impact, at least for many readers, is deepened.

Now let us take Admiral Byrd's book. It is a vigorous and interesting piece of work and will hold a high place in its field. The style, at times, strains for effects, but most of the effects are attained. Byrd's senses are alert and he has enthusiasm for his work and both are reflected in his lively and elastic prose. This is the gist of what would be said of the book in the ordinary newspaper and magazine reviews, along with some descriptions of the more dramatic episodes.

A Marxist reviewer, however, would notice other things as well. Looking at the map on the endpapers he would find the place names given by Byrd of some significance. They include some names dictated by sentiment, the names of his wife, his friend, the Secretary of the Navy and some of the members of his expedition; but, for the most part, the honors go to capitalists. One sees Jacob Ruppert Coast, Mt. Clarence Mackey, John Hays Hammond Inlet, Hearst Land, Mt. Seward M. Patterson, Rockefeller Plateau, Mt. Paul Block, Mt. Rosenwald, Mt. Bumstead, Mt. Vincent Astor, Edsel Ford Range, Sulzberger Bay and so on.

One wonders what other scientists must think of such a distribution of nomenclature. Names like Hearst and Paul Block might ap-

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in a bourgeois history of culture, scarcely for the purpose of honorable cord. What is the clue?

Speaking of the difficulties of organizing his expedition, Admiral Byrd mentions the fact that he had to become a panhandler on a large scale. A certain income was derived from magazine and book royalties, lecture fees and radio broadcast income. This income was insufficient. Most of the members of the expedition worked on a volunteer basis. Supplies for the expedition, from ship ballast to aeroplanes, some which were assembled from contributions of parts had to be begged for. Where there was undisputed advertising value, as in the case of gasoline and oil which could then be advertised as standing the exceptional tests of Antarctic exploration there was no trouble in securing contributions of supplies. But where the advertising value was problematic the capitalist interest in science diminished and the begging had to be intensified. And the end result is that the fringe of the Antarctic continent has become a billboard for American capitalism—and a cheap one.

Byrd, however, is as well acclimated to capitalist bad weather for science as he is to the rigors of the Antarctic. His comments in these matters do not rise above the level of good sportsmanship, a low level unfortunately for a scientist who might be presumed to look for social significances of such conditions as carefully as he observes meteorological conditions. What he does, like a good capitalist citizen, is to rationalize the status of the expedition as an adjunct to a score of advertising departments. He insists that the products advertised were good, standard products.

A Marxist reviewer would of necessity have to point out these things, as well as to note the straining Admiral Byrd has to do when he explains and defends the objectives of his expeditions which, from the capitalist point of view, were relatively romantic. The Marxist reviewer would notice what is obviously relevant, the different attitude of mind and different type of organization of scientific expeditions such as that of the Chelyushkin expedition, for example, in the socialist society of Soviet Russia. There the whole nation was behind the expedition and its men and women became national heroes. The findings of the expedition were considered an addition to the national treasure. The returning members of the expedition did not have to sell advertising and go on lecture tours to pay back debts of the expedition. And the section of the Arctic Coast they explored did not become a billboard for a Hearst. Are these irrelevancies? It is hard to imagine that any one genuinely interested in science and human progress in general, would think so.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

Case History

WE SOVIET WOMEN, by Tatiana Tchernavin. E. P. Dutton Co. $2.50.

MME. TCHERNAVIN'S thesis is that the Soviet government is the root of all evil in Russia, the cause of hunger, the source of degradation. The blame, even for the intervention and the Civil Wars, she lays upon the Soviet government.

Thus, although she grudgingly acknowledges that suffering was inevitable from the devastations of the intervention and the Civil War, the Soviet government is still the malefactor. And the long ordeal of reconstruction which involved not only the building of new cities and new industries but the building of a new humanity is so presented as to make the Soviet government again the inventor of all its strains and agonies.

To prove her point she has gathered case records of various types of women all of whom have suffered in one way or another as a consequence of the revolution. She calls them *We Soviet Women,* thus turning the abnormalities into the norm. That such cases exist no one denies. I met with some of them in my work in the Institute for the Protection of Women and Children in Moscow. Cases like these occur. It is important, however, to note two things: that Mme. Tchernavin's record covers cases only through 1931 and that the Soviet government's effort to diminish the incidence of such cases in its social system, an effort far more determined and scientific than any other nation in the world is making in disposing of similar casualties arising out of social pressures, is sneered at by Mme. Tchernavin.

Her cases have obviously been selected to prove her point. They are scarcely typical even of her class; and they have no relevance to the Russian working-class women.

Mme. Tchernavin's real accomplishment is the baring of her own case history. She was a member of the middle class in Czarist Russia. Her mind burns like an ikon candle before the memories of lovely furniture, great houses, good aristocratic schools, fine food, loyal and reliable servants. A village priest was the poorest person she knew in her childhood. Such a life made her an alien among her own people and when the revolution precipitated her among the masses her shocked sensibilities were continually in protest. Even when she tried to do her best to adjust herself, there was always a chip on her shoulder. The effect of her book, therefore, is the negative one of establishing her disqualifications as a judge.

Her dissent was constant with her and she saw everything in its disfiguring lens. There could not help but be mistakes and unfairness in a process of change more complete than any society in history has gone through, where the laws, the ethics, the very living habits of a people were remodelled. These she sees not in their perspective but as the totality. Occasionally she is complimentary: "I liked teaching at the Rabfac. . . . It was a new and, I must say, a good institution." But the good, bad and indifferent all contribute to her thesis, like the scolding of an angry wife enumerating the actions of a husband who irks her. Frequently it is the better things in Soviet life which she uses to strengthen her argument against it. Sometimes it is Stalin who is tearing down all the good work of Lenin and again it is Lenin through the N.E.P. who is destroying the foundations of existence or it is the very viciousness of the people themselves which is brought to the surface by the political system. And continually she exhibits the frustration which must have come because she was unable to put herself wholeheartedly into a new situation.

This is a personal book and to a certain extent it requires a personal criticism. I know how she feels—her world ended—barriers appeared from nowhere which cramped the social reflexes of her class. There was no place for her ideas of right and wrong in the new and apparently chaotic society—she found no security. She wanted scope, amenities and graceful intelligent life on her own terms. But what she forgets is that she did not possess these with any degree of security before the Revolution otherwise they would not have been lost to her. Most of us want the pleasant and worthwhile things of life but we can share them only in the certain knowledge that we share them with others, that they are a part of the social fabric of our communities, not the jealously guarded prerogatives of a few.

The Revolution which levelled Mme. Tchernavin's life to a lower economic and social status increased the *possibility* of her building to a firmer security and happiness. To do so she would have had to build collectively with her neighbors for the things she wanted and thought right. Thousands of members, even of her own class, succeeded in doing so.

ALICE WITHROW FIELD.

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The Million Words of Mr. Barnes

THE HISTORY OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION, by Harry Elmer Barnes. Illustrated. Two vols., 911 and 1170 pages. New York. Harcourt Brace and Company. $10.

THE difference between experts and sociologists has been said to lie in the fact that experts know more and more about less and less, whereas sociologists know less and less about more and more. Mr. Barnes is a sociologist. He is also, in intent, a political scientist, a criminologist, a journalist, a teacher, and a historian. To suggest that he is jack of all trades and master of none would be unkind. He has to a peculiar degree the type of encyclopedic erudition which passes for learning in American academic circles. He compiles bibliographies. He masses footnotes. He quotes authorities. He persuades other professors to read proofs. He pours forth hundreds of thousands of words and gets them published. Often he gets people to read them, for his liberal middle-class attitudes are seasoned with just the correct amount of heterodoxy to induce liberal reviewers to dub him "provocative" and "stimulating." In these "scholarly" arts he has no peer.

But for all of this Mr. Barnes is not a scholar and in all likelihood will never be one. He is a pedantic popularizer. In this ambivalent role lies his strength and weakness. Clemenceau once said: "Briand knows nothing and understands everything; Poincare knows everything and understands nothing." Mr. Barnes is like Poincare, whom he once accused of having instigated the Great War. He knows the literature of philosophy but understands no philosophy. He knows names and books in many fields of knowledge but understands none of them. He is never guilty of an original idea and seldom develops fully the implications of old ideas. He is an admirable copy-writer and stage manager. He can organize and display in brave parade half the learning of the world. But he cannot think, analyze, interpret, integrate or synthesize. As a rehasher, he is unsurpassed. As a creative intellect, his rating is zero.

These characteristics were never displayed to better advantage (and disadvantage) than in this literally monumental effort to write "new" history. The merits of this work will exhaust the superlatives of reviewers. It is colossal, gigantic, stupendous. It is readable and refreshing. It is packed with facts. There are few errors, thanks to the author's meticulousness and to his dozens of academic proof-readers. Here in well organized form are the elements of archaeology, anthropology, geography, sociology, economics, theology, military science, education, penology, law literature, astronomy, chemistry, physics, mathematics, folklore, etc. The index is excellent. The book is a gold mine of information. It will probably be a gold mine of royalties, since it will doubtless be adopted as a history text in many colleges and will be purchased by the kind of people who liked Wells' *Outline of History*.

This circumstance, coupled with the fulsome praise of the more respectable reviewers, should enable Mr. Barnes to bear with fortitude a few comments which might otherwise be painful. These volumns are not history, "new," "old" or otherwise. Neither do they contain very much (apart from some well-chosen quotations) which would enable the reader to understand the development of Western Civilization. Masses of unrelated facts are not a contribution to knowledge, any more than a pile of bricks is a house, or a series of still photographs, lacking in continuity, a motion picture. Mr. Barnes' "history" is static, not dynamic. It has movement only through tricks of style and cross references, not by virtue of the material itself. From Pithecanthropus to Pharoah, from Lycurgus to Luther, from Heraclitus to Hitler, from Sargon to Stalin the tale proceeds. But it is not a narrative and still less an interpretation of a narrative. The subject matter is dead, disintegrated, disparate. There is no *motif*, no sequence of causation, no dialectical progression, no theme of unity, no clue whatever to the meaning of all the sound and fury, the science and superstition, the order and chaos, the beauty and despair of the human adventure.

Why? In the first place, Mr. Barnes has misconceived the mission of the "new history." He assumes that cultural and institutional history is somehow more important than political and military history. But the older historians who confined themselves to political and military events did, within their limitations, deal with intelligible processes of change. Because these processes were sufficiently intelligible by themselves, later historians delved into economic, social and cultural changes for explanations of political change. The springs of political action and the dynamics of politics can in part be revealed in this fashion. Mr. Barnes, however, has forgotten what his cultural materials are supposed to explain. He slights political events and all but omits military events. There are no decisive battles in these two thousand pages (the Napoleonic Wars get three lines, though Caesar's conquest of Gaul receives three pages), despite the fact that the destinies of mankind have often been determined for generations to come by the clash of armies. There are descriptions of political institutions, but almost no political history, though the State has ever been the dominant agency of social control and the arts of politics have often decided the weal or woe of millions. The cultural materials are interesting and no doubt worthy of attention by themselves. But they throw no light on social processes. By themselves they are irrelevant both to history and social science.

In the second place, Mr. Barnes, like most historians, not only has no perspective, no criteria of selection and interpretation, no standards of judgment, but he is proud of this failing. He sets out to tell "the whole story of human development." He modestly offers the reader "the complete record of man's development on our planet." "This book . . . is not based upon any preconceived notion of social evolution, nor have I been governed by any rigid schematic conception of historical interpretation." Does Mr. Barnes tell the "whole story"? Obviously not. No one could, in a million words nor in ten million words. Such a record would be meaningless. He necessarily selects facts for inclusion, exclusion, casual mention and emphasis. But he selects

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purpose in mind, with no goal explicitly formulated and stated, with no objective of presentation which will explain human interrelationships and the nature of social change. He selects blindly and in accordance with his subjective and unacknowledged prejudices. These prejudices, while familiar enough, are neither organized nor consistent with one another. Mr. Barnes likes science and dislikes revealed religion. He hates France and loves Germany. He is interested in Russia and not interested in Spain. He admires democracy and scorns dictatorships. He is skeptical of capitalism and sympathetic toward social radicalism. Admirable (or detestable) as these prejudices may be, their unconscious use as criteria of selection results only in hodge-podge.

In such a work, any unifying scheme of interpretation would be preferable to none. Buckle, Hegel, Marx, all gave meaning to history in terms of some central theme of causation. Barnes toys with all these schemes, accepts none and ejects none, but cooks them all up together in a murky soup. He leans towards Marxism cautiously—presenting the English, American and French Revolutions as middle-class revolts, describing Finance Capitalism, perceiving the class implications of fascism, evaluating realistically the American Constitution, the Supreme Court and the New Deal, and devoting a whole chapter to Soviet Russia. But he does not (or will not) comprehend historical materialism. He cannot relate social stratifications to modes of production (for example, he discusses manorial economy *after* the feudal social system), nor can he understand the social bases of culture and the class content of politics.

This is not to say that all history written from a non-Marxian viewpoint is worthless. Only fanatics would accept such a position. But Marx offered an interpretation of history which does explain social change and political change.

Barnes has no consistent viewpoint and no illuminating explanation of anything. He has, in short, no *Weltanschauung*—and without this no history of civilization can have the slightest significance. These volumes have no significance save as an encyclopedia of unrelated facts. They contain only Mr. Barnes lost in a million words.

ARNOLD W. BARTELL.

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Miner vs. Fink

HORSE SHOE BOTTOMS, by Tom Tippett. Harper and Bros. $2.50.
BLACK EARTH, by Thomas Rowan. Hillman-Curl, Inc. $2.50.

I WOULD like to see Tom Tippett and Thomas Rowan both start working in the same mine and then I'd like to see which side of the barbed wire these two writers would select in the event of a strike. My point is this. I'm willing to bet my right arm up to the elbow that we would find Tippett at his post on the picket line and Mr. Rowan scabbing for all he's worth (his worth, incidentally, to the mine bosses as a scab would prove immeasurably more than his value to his publisher). Mr. Rowan's allegedly true account of the Alabama mine fields is a unique piece of pornographic penny-dreadful writing. Inasmuch as I am not a book critic but a field organizer, I hope the editors of THE NEW MASSES will permit me the liberty of going out of bounds for a moment. In short—Mr. Rowan's book (my apologies to Margaret Marshall and Mary McCarthy) stinks. I feel safe in stating that even Hearst who specializes in horror stories of gentlemen returning from the Soviet Union via the Chicago loop, would not hire Mr. Rowan for his anti-Red slobberings, merely because Rowan is too obviously a rat and writes like one.

The author of *Black Earth* tips his hand on the book jacket when he says, "I assure you most faithfully that I do not base this book only on the types of union leaders it was my lot to know in the coal fields of Jefferson County, Alabama. I base it—and with the full knowledge of what I am saying—on leaders and organizers I have met and known from the Atlantic and Pacific. I have been on both sides of the fence—a striker and a strike-breaker."

And I, in turn, assure Mr. Rowan most faithfully—at the risk of being accused of practicing clairvoyance—that the only time he could ever have been even slightly accused of being a striker was that particular time when he found the picket lines so solid that it wasn't worth his skin to try to abide by his congenital inclinations. So, undoubtedly, he stayed on strike with the lads who would have softened him to a bleeding pulp if he had tried to sneak into the pits. He "struck."

Mr. Rowan says that he doesn't like unions. He doesn't like union organizers. He doesn't like miners. He absolutely hates strikes. In one passage, after ranting for several full pages, thus: "God damn union organizers! Why in hell couldn't they go to work and earn their living by a little toil instead of the constant wagging of their tongues? . . . Were they all so ungodly cowardly . . . while they *themselves* kept their precious souls and bodies far back and safely clear when filthy and stomach revolting work was to be done?" . . . he goes on to describe a rallying of striking miners to prevent a trainload of scabs coming into the mine, as "like buzzards on the wing, they came from every direction."

Throughout the book, which tells the heart-rending story of a poor but oh-so-loyal-to-the-company miner, Mr. Rowan pauses every third word or so to describe the miners as "bullet headed, gorilla like, surely not born from the womb of a woman" or as being on the picket lines because "it kept their nagging women-folk from seeing the actual cowardice quivering and shaking like jelly-fat beneath their skins."

The story, aside from the general stench, is stupid. The loyal miner, confused by the false promises of the organizers, strikes, witnesses the strikers slaughtering a whole trainload of scabs, goes back to work, falls in love with the superintendent's daughter, loses a leg in the mine (romantically!), comes out of the hospital and hobbles on one leg (just in the nick of time) up on the platform of the union meeting and (rah, rah!) wraps himself in an American flag and prevents the second strike from taking place. The "hogfat" union organizers get theirs in the neck from the suddenly aroused miners who murder them while singing the Star Spangled Banner. The organizers get killed, and by some strange quirk of the author's mind his hero dies too. In fact, at the end of the book, everybody seems to die. Is the author of *Black Earth* around?

Rowan is by nature a Bergoff "noble." He probably wrote *Black Earth* between breaking strikes. I feel a little sorry for the publishers who were wangled into printing the book. In fact, I feel so sorry that if they will drop me a line I'll get them in touch with a big paper concern who will give them a fair price (by the pound) for the unsold copies of *Black Earth*. Perhaps I'm a little too sensitive in suggesting this roundabout way of disposing of the book.

I am reluctant to give my opinion, on the same page, of Tom Tippett's really splendid story of the early struggles of the miners in *Horse Shoe Bottoms*. After reading *Black Earth*, it's very much like coming out of a slaughter house and plunging into a cold crystal stream which makes you catch your breath and sends the blood singing joyously through your veins.

Aside from the hard beauty often attained by Tippett in the story of the founding of the miners union, the book has rendered a distinct service to the American working class by reviving a history of struggle of which we can justly be proud. Selecting a segment of virgin coal land, surrounded by Illinois prairies, Tippet opens his story in the '70s. Old Bill, symbolic of pioneering paternal capitalism, buys a strip of coal land and envisions the building of a little empire

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in which he can employ the coal diggers from whom he had himself sprung — English miners. At his invitation they come—among them, John Stafford and his bride. No one *but* a miner (and Tippett is a miner descended from miners) could have told the story from that point on.

Old Bill, his heart with his miners, soon found his purse controlled by the local banking interests who dump him ignominiously when he supports the miners in their first clash. The confused groping of the miners for some means to protect their interests is related with effectiveness. Unions in the mine fields were then in their embryonic stage and the men who eventually forged them with their very blood and lives will some day grace the pages of Soviet American history as epic working-class heroes.

When Sam Haywood walked into Kickapoo Creek and got a job, he brought with him work of the miners in other fields. He brought with him the words and teachings of Siney, the bearded clear-thinking founder of the miners union. Haywood found fertile ground to plant the seeds of unionism in Kickapoo Creek. In the ensuing struggle between the miners and operators, Stafford, under Haywood's guidance, became the leader of the miners, his fame spreading far beyond the creek. Struggles became more frequent and, tempered by the fiery blows of the periodic clashes, there grew local leaders and the beginnings of a union. The first convention of the miners, held in Youngstown, found Stafford in its midst, thrilled by the strength of Siney, inspired by the challenge flung from the convention to the operators, and for the rest of his life to work determinedly for the building of the union. Stafford's character, unbending in defeat, calm in victory, understanding in the midst of suffering, is splendidly portrayed by Tippett.

I think it would be wise for some of our budding proletarian writers to sharpen up their pencils and take a few notes from this book. Tippett has firmly refuted the erroneous notion as to just what sort of person the worker is—how he thinks, how he feels about his work. There still exists a feeling among sections of liberal and proletarian writing circles that the miner, steel worker and other toilers in heavy industry are past-masters in the art of hate, discontent and militancy—they hate their bosses, they detest their jobs, and they spend the major portion of their waking hours passing disgruntled remarks to each other on the drabness of their lives. Unfortunately, many of our writers approach their job with just such a set formula in their own mind, resulting in an untrue picturization that often gives our bourgeois critics every reason in the world to howl.

As a matter of fact, 99.44 percent of the workers in basic industry are just the opposite. Too many writers follow the observation balloon methods of reporting,—from above, detached and unable to feel, hear and smell. They see only mechanical groupings of the classes, missing the laughter that intermingles with the strife and confusing proud contempt for sterile hate. [illegible] our proletarian writers would do well "wait until you see the whites of their eyes before you . . . write."

Tippett depicts the miners of the '70s as they were—human, confused, proud of their calling as miners and loving their work. Don't yell treason! I know what I'm talking about, being from basic industry myself and a son of workers. Tippett not only knows his people intimately, but he knows how to write about them superbly well. I hereby nominate Tippett to tackle a writing job that few of our proletarian writers could handle—the story of the Molly Maguires.

JOHN MULLEN.

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Murals in Fiction

ROMANOFF, by Leonid Soboleff. Longmans, Green & Co. $2.50.

HERE is a battle picture at a critical point in modern history. But, to retain for a moment the metaphor of a picture, this is no easel painting. Rather is it a mural, peopled with representative figures, sensitive in its contrasts, significant in its implications.

The historical moment is the opening of the World War; the background, old Russia; the foreground, the decks of the Russian warship Romanoff and the streets of St. Petersburg.

The period covered in the novel includes the two tense months before the declaration of war. We are introduced to Georgi Levitin, midshipman, on three days leave from the Naval College, on his way to visit his lieutenant brother on board the Romanoff, stationed at Helsingfors. We are made to see Georgi, callow and young though he is, as a thorough representative of the upper class, snobbish, superficial, stuffed to the ears with schoolboy patriotism. We are given an unforgettably ironic picture of Helsingfors as that city appeared to a Russian naval officer.

Then comes the study of life on the ship, at once tremendous in implication and minutely perfect in detail. The luxurious routine of the officers' lives, the ship's priest, the heavy lot of servants, seamen, stokers—all are there. The intricate working of machinery, both of steel and human flesh is vividly presented. We get an insight into that "senseless" discipline which converts men into passive tools.

We see a minor mutiny of the stokers and the ruthlessness with which they are punished, a ruthlessness dictated by the prophetic terror of the officers of that day when *all the sailors will act together.* As further augury of that day, we are witnesses to secret meetings of revolutionary sailors on board this same ship of order and steel and naval rules.

We go with Georgi to St. Petersburg on the further enjoyment of his leave. Here, we partake in the great public celebration in honor of the visit of Poincaré, the French president. Here, too, we hear the grim note of anger underneath the hurrahs. But now the note swells, for one victorious hour, into a mighty roar, when factory strikers swarm into the main street of St. Petersburg, shouting the Marseillaise, bringing with them as hostages some petty French officers whose presence enables them, for short moments, to sing the "scurrilous revolutionary ballad" which is also the national anthem of France. The demonstration of the strikers is attacked by cossacks; but the bloody defeat is only the forerunner of greater struggles to come.

The final section of the book is a return to the Romanoff on the very eve of the declaration of war. This time we see even more clearly the will to rebellion underneath the polished surface of discipline. At the close of the book, as the Romanoff steams to sea, we know that she carries within her seeds of the October Revolution.

Romanoff is but slight plot in the usual sense and practically no development of character. Georgi, who holds the place of a leading character, assumes significance chiefly for what he fails to understand. In fact, all the characters are given as types, symbols of attitude and classes, in much the same way that the figures in a mural are symbols. Throughout, there is the sense of the movement of social forces. The contrasts and significant details present unmistakably the body of the old system, pregnant with the new.

The fitness of such a book for the novel form may be debatable. There may be critics who will say that the significant material is reportage and the lack of usual plot or character growth are weaknesses. I doubt greatly if such pigeon-holing is a fair or adequate measure of the book. Leonid Soboleff has not damaged his reportage by using the novel as container. Rather, he has widened the horizon of the novel as we know it in a significant and living direction. The book makes me, for one, want to invert Robert Forsythe's slogan to read "Forward with the novel."

ANN RIVINGTON.

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The Theater

Two New Yiddish Plays

THE very wealth of material contained between the covers of Ornitz's captivating novel creates for the dramatizer an *embarras de richesse*. Whatever he may throw overboard in the interest of compactness will be viewed by the informed playgoer as a sin of omission. Surely all of the *milieu,* characters and dramatic situations of the original could not possibly be confined within the stage. The problem of artistic selection is, naturally, both qualitative and quantitative. With some elements discarded or reduced, others must stand out in sharper focus than the novelist originally intended.

On the other hand, the heterogeneous material of *Haunch, Paunch and Jowl* is integrated by its main theme and its protagonist Meyer Hirsch, who at once is a composite portrait of a number of successful Jewish politicians and a symbol of a whole generation of East Side immigrants. It is to the credit of the Artef production of *Haunch, Paunch and Jowl* that the main theme and the principal character of the book have been brought out in full significance. In Khaver Paver's Yiddish version of the dramatization by Samuel Ornitz and Donald Davis, fully a half of the time is devoted to the establishment of the environment and the sketching of the minor characters, and only in its latter half is it a play of situation and conflict. But from the very beginning *Haunch, Paunch and Jowl* drives in the direction of building up the central character and by the time the courtroom drama begins, the sinister, unconscionable and hideously opportunistic Tammany politician has pervaded the play and given it its true meaning. Judge Hirsch is confronted with the choice of either sentencing to death his former fellow gangster, the feeble-minded Iky Dope, and winning the approval of the traction trust and with it the gubernatorial nomination, or of granting a new trial and regaining his self-esteem and the love of Esther. He chooses the former because he no longer has control over his political ambitions to which he has devoted his whole life. Threatened with exposure by the "dream-struck" social uplifter Barney Finn, by Esther and other representatives of an outraged community, Judge Hirsch resorts to the "refuge of every scoundrel" and decides to launch a campaign against the Socialists, radicals and other "un-American" elements.

Though creaking in its joints and missing fire in its most tense moments, *Haunch, Paunch and Jowl* comes alive on the stage both by virtue of the script and the vibrant performances of M. Goldstein in the leading role, W. Velichanski in the role of Philip Gold, the ruthless manufacturer who rose from among the exploited immigrants, and a few others—notably Luba Rymer, Amelia Babad, A. Hirschbein, H. Brisman, H. Gendel, Goldie Rosler, Sarah Silberberg and A. Cohen. The settings by M. Zolotaroff are highly effective, if not always manageable technically.

But when it comes to the important item of direction, one gets the feeling that this time Benno Schneider has let the production down a good deal by straining for scenic effect. What we get is not East Side *milieu,* nor an array of East Side characters of a generation ago, but artificial, stagey versions. To be sure, the production abounds in local color, but it lacks the breath of life and is *theater-made.* His flair for stylization does not stand Schneider in good stead this time. While he has succeeded in obtaining the proper dramatic and character values in the essential moments of the play, the artificial animation of some of his scenes really devitalizes both character and environment. There is too much theatrical atmosphere in *Haunch, Paunch and Jowl* and too little authentic East Side.

One is also disappointed by the skimpy treatment of the positive characters—Barney Finn, Esther, Lefkowitz, Berle and others. The fault here is mainly the dramatizers', and the result is a lack of balance between the wholesome and the putrid in the social scene that produced its Tammany politicians, gangsters, prostitutes and shyster lawyers, but also its socialist leaders, union builders, poets and composers.

But the reviewer feels he is beginning to violate his own injunction against dwelling upon the sins of omission in the stage version of a splendid novel. They are many and grave, but are greatly outweighed by the virtues of both play and production. The play at the tiny theater on 48th Street deserves to bear the name of Ornitz's novel and the proud trademark of the Artef.

A Bunt mit a Statchke[1] is hard to classify. It is neither operetta, nor ballet, nor pantomime. But it is novel, beautiful and proletarian. The use of a mass choir, concealed from view, as the most important "character" in a light musical show is wholly arbitrary, but not to use the Freiheit Singing Society with Jacob Schaefer conducting, would be inexcusable. In fact, the entire project was conceived with a view of giving the choir a chance to sing those beautiful revolutionary folk songs, varying in mood and color, but invariably charming and affecting. To Yiddish audiences (and singers, too) these songs ring with nostalgic overtones, for their origin is comparatively recent, dating back from twenty to forty years. Many a Jewish worker sang them in his youth while at work, on an outing, at home or at a secret political meeting in the woods.

Originally produced this past summer at Camp Kinderland, this "folklore operetta"

[1] The program of the International Celebration on New Year's eve at the Venice Theater credits me with having had a part in "conceiving" the musical show under review. Actually, I merely yielded to the magic of the folklore material and helped Jacob Schaefer and B. Fenster select the folk songs from a printed collection (Soviet edition) and arrange them into a semblance of continuity and dramatic pattern. Since the material itself is the most precious thing in *A Bunt mit a Statchke* (literally—"Riot and Strike") Schaefer's brilliant treatment of the material and the performance of the Freiheit Singing Society are mainly responsible for the vitality of the show, my own part in it is only auxiliary.

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changes in its several presentations in New York. As a new theater form it is still tentative. More can be accomplished by adding spoken dialogue and making use of a suitable plot. But in its present state *A Bunt mit a Statchke* succeeds in delighting audiences by giving the familiar folk songs a scenic form (mainly pantomimic) which both matches and enhances the naive quality of the folk material. With the aid of M. Goldstein (of the Artef), Edith Segal and Lillian Shapiro, who created the dances against the lovely background of Louis Bunin's naively stylized settings, the acting becomes completely integrated with the singing of the choir, which somehow emerges as organically necessary. It is this oneness of apparently uncombinable elements that gives *A Bunt mit a Statchke* its distinct and original form and verve. But since workers' choruses are developing rapidly throughout the country, this unorthodox use of them may as well be legitimatized and made the starting point of a new theatrical form capable of bringing to life the potential dramatic values of work songs and revolutionary ballads. In this sense *A Bunt mit a Statchke* may well prove a milepost upon a new road of proletarian and folk operetta.

The concrete material that went into the making of *A Bunt mit a Statchke* does not lend itself to description. The song of the seamstress who pleads: "Oy, have pity with me and become my betrothed and take me out of the dreary shop"; or the song of the crippled veteran writing from the field hospital to his mother "about my health," with "the doctors surrounding me and my heart bleeding, and my dear mother not at my bedside"; or the agitation song of the tailor, "when we work from eight till ten, then we work entirely for nothing"; or the narrative of the political exile, "I was whipped with *nahaikas* to stop me from saying 'long live liberty, to hell with Nicolai'"—all these sincere and beautifully simple outpourings of nameless poets and composers must be heard, as sung by Schaefer's singers to be fully appreciated.

The fact that members of the Freiheit Singing Society, without previous stage training, have succeeded in giving the stage performance such poise and fluency, may serve as encouragement to other non-professional groups in undertaking similar experiments. Meantime let us be grateful to Schaefer and his singers for having given us a piece of beautiful proletarian art, even though its forms may be tentative.

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A Bunt mit a Statchke three next performances in N Bronx Workers' Center; Jan. 1, Lyceum.

New Theater Night (Civic Reper Jan. 12, 8:30 P.M.). The Actors Troupe *Freedom Ring* in four plays: *Private Hicks,* Maltz's prize-winning one-act play; *Unto Glory,* by Paul Green; *Angelo Herndon,* mass cital by Elizabeth England; *Hymn to the Ri Sun,* an exceptionally powerful one-act play c chain-gang prison, by Paul Green.

A Million Torments (Forum Theater, 1 East Street.) The American premiere of Valentine K tayev's satirical Soviet farce. Jan. 15 to 19, 8:40 P.

Dead End (Belasco Theater). Written a mounted with photographic realism to show wh happens when Millionaire Row and Rat-and-Lou Alley occupy the same city block.

Libel! (Henry Miller). Three acts in a Briti courtroom, a war-wracked British gentleman trial. Robert Forsythe's article of last week ca stand as a review of this tour de force.

Pride and Prejudice (Plymouth Theater). A amazingly adept and delightful dramatization Jane Austen's novel of husband-hunting Victoria ladies. Well worth seeing.

S. B.

The Screen

Tale of Two Cities

THE film version of the Charles Dickens novel is a rather maudlin affair in the best love-story manner. Dull, sentimental and not infrequently insidiously vicious, it does justice to the tradition of the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studios. Yea, the meek and the humble shall inherit heaven, the guillotine if necessary, but not the earth.

The story of Sydney Carton is fairly familiar, and the film adaptation is close enough to the original Dickens, and especially to the moral fibres that forget in religious squeamishness the stirring rise of the French people to arms. Love and self-sacrifice dominate throughout the film, self-sacrifice for love of individuals, friendship for individuals and always for the House of Evrémonde. As a matter of fact, even Charles Darnay, nephew of the Marquis himself, can't escape completely the epidemic of Christian goodness, and the picture resolves itself into a sort of chase, every good character falling all over himself hell-bound for self-sacrifice.

Sydney Carton, you remember, wins the race and the guillotine, all for the sake of the erstwhile Evrémonde, now banker, for his sweet Lucie and for the sake of their child and their happiness.

Dr. Manette is released from the Bastille. For eighteen years he has rotted away in the North Tower at the special request of the Marquis. In the picture, we never witness the North Tower; we never get inside the Bastille. Such horrors as existed there, we suppose, might bring us too close to home. However, to go on with the movie story, Henry B. Walthall is a pathetic old, bright-eyed Dr. Manette who must be removed t England to find the "Resurrection and the Life." Lucie, his daughter, in passage across the Channel, meets Darney who has just finished renouncing his uncle, the same Marquis responsible for, among a multitude of vicious practices, the interment of Dr. Manette. The love story is begun.

Darnay is accused of treason on trumped-up charges. Comic relief. Sydney Carton, advocate, dissolute, needing to be salvaged in the best Salvation Army fashion, in a fiasco of a court scene, mealy jury and disinfectants for the judge, turns the evidence and saves the ex-French nobleman from being hung on the gibbet. This is the first life saved and the triangle is in full swing.

With the rise of the people and the storming of the Bastille, the second book is opened. Let us stop here for a moment and see what Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer does with the French masses. The first flash is the wine-in-the-gutter scene, a fairly sympathetic picture of a mass of hungry, starving wretches flinging themselves into an upset barrel and sucking up the wine from the stones and the mud of the streets.

The forcing of the gates, the fighting with dogs for raw meat in the stone court of the aristocrat's mansion, the coming of the guards, the slashing down of the peasants, trampling them down under the hooves of the horses, although these scenes are romantically flavored and somewhat mechanical in texture, they may pass too as sympathetic treatment.

The big moment for the cameras was, of

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g of the Bastille. The
.e streets, their converging,
-, the advance of the people
.ied tide on the bridges, on to
.ioats, "Down with the Bastille," and
unflinching march of the inspired re-
:ion into the face of the guns and the
.nted cannon—done even in the least
ginative manner, how else but dramatic
1 these episodes be? And the episodes were
.matic, but leave it to the M-G-M direc-
's to distort, deflect and mutilate. In the
al analysis, as the film gives it to us, it is
t the mass uprising that takes the Bastille
:d destroys it; it is not the mass pressure
.ainst the barricades; it is not the masses
ading the masses even to a death to rid
.emselves of unbearable oppressors; it is the
.ldiers, French soldiers, who arrive as the
.asses turn and flee from fire, who turn
.eir guns against the prison fort, and the
.de.

We are just a bit puzzled by this bit of M-G-M strategy until we realize that the French soldiers are firing at the Hessians, hired troops, mercenaries, who have been brought into Paris to keep down the populace. It is a case of hired soldiers fighting hired soldiers (in the movie version) and not French soldiers fighting with the workers against their officers, corrupt defenders of the oppressing tyranny of the aristocrats.

And this is the turning point. With the taking of the Bastille, whatever sympathy the studios possessed for the people is immediately denied, and the masses are made into a mad, vicious, brutal, animal-like, utterly inhuman mechanism. The shout is for blood and no shouter's face has the slightest trace of an intelligence lurking somewhere behind it. A pack of wolves on the M-G-M screen would be more "humanitarian." The wolf will love, if nothing else, its own cub. Nothing resembling love or kindness or ratiocination affects the French Revolution. Such is the manner and the diversion of the Hollywood motion picture industry.

The aristocracy, of course, you have guessed if you did not already know, is another matter. It is true that their carriages rode rough-shod through the streets and that they were indecently annoyed if a peasant unhappily got in the way of the horses' hooves, but they did so love the minuet, and they did know how to die well, like nobles. This should be enough, but let us get to the end of the story.

Charles Darnay is tricked into returning to Paris where, as an aristocrat, he is arrested and condemned to the guillotine by a mad, howling mob. The stage is set for the great Victorian sacrifice. Sydney Carton, a perfectly swell character and an otherwise perfectly sane individual, for the love of Lucie manages to change places with the imprisoned Darnay, puts his head on the block to the accompaniment of the usual Victorian twaddle about "better things," "the Resurrection," and "better rest."

The thing is much too much a tear-jerker, Dickens' sentimentality and Christian goodness in bold relief. Even the really good acting of Ronald Colman and Blanche Yurka can't offset the straining of the picture and such obviously unsympathetic tricks as the continued and deliberately stressed ugly, insane laughter of a Salem-witch-like Vengeance.

OWEN BURKE.

Between Ourselves

WITH this issue Michael Gold assumes the editorship of THE NEW MASSES. Readers of the old Masses, The Liberator and the monthly New Masses will recall Gold's long association with these publications both as a contributor and editor. He has been an associate editor of the weekly NEW MASSES since the spring of 1934.

This issue also marks the departure of Herman Michelson, who has served the weekly NEW MASSES since its inception as managing editor. Michelson will leave shortly for the Soviet Union where he will travel and write for THE NEW MASSES.

Be sure to see next week's issue, particularly if you do not get the magazine regularly. It will carry full details of THE NEW MASSES Cartoon Title Contest. There are fifty-two prizes in cash: first prize, $1,000; second prize, $250; fifty prizes of $5 each.

Our office staff is giving a party for the benefit of the magazine, Saturday evening, Jan. 18 at Studio 503, Steinway Hall (111 West 57th Street). In addition to dancing and refreshments, entertainment will include Will Geer's revolutionary songs, a troupe from *Let Freedom Ring,* Bunin's Puppets and the new Hanns Eisler song recordings. Admission 35 cents.

The three poems by Stanley Burnshaw in this issue are part of his book, *The Iron Land,* to be published this month by the Centaur Press. Burnshaw will be the speaker at the next meeting of the Friends of THE NEW MASSES, Jan. 15, 8:30 p. m., Steinway Hall (Room 717A).

Celeste Strack, formerly a student at the University of California (Los Angeles division), is an officer of the newly formed American Student Union.

Next week Bruce Minton will report on the Third United States Congress of the American League Against War and Fascism.

Both Elizabeth Horvath of 530 Audubon Ave., New York and Sayre Fleischer of 1400 Clinton Ave., Bronx, N. Y. have files of back numbers of THE NEW MASSES for donation to an organization.

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